

GRACE *Defended,*

IN A

Modest PLEA

FOR AN

Important TRUTH;

NAMELY,

That the OFFER of SALVATION made to Sinners in the Gospel, comprises in it an OFFER of the Grace given in REGENERATION.

AND

SHEWING the Consistency of this Truth with the FREE and SOVEREIGN GRACE of GOD, in the whole Work of Man's Salvation.

IN WHICH

The Doctrine of ORIGINAL SIN and HUMANE IMPOTENCE, the Object and Extent of REDEMPTION, the Nature of REGENERATION, the Difference between COMMON and SPECIAL GRACE, the Nature of justifying FAITH, and other IMPORTANT POINTS, are considered and cleared.

By Experience Mayhew. K

Isai. lvii. 14. *Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the Way, take up the stumbling Block out of the Way of my People.*

Psal. lxxxv. 10. *Mercy and Truth are met together, &c.*

B O S T O N:

Printed by B. GREEN, and Company, for D. HENCHMAN, in
Cornhil. 1744.

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THE
PRECIOUS

RUTH is a very precious Jewel: Taken in general it is so, but that which is emphatically called *the Truth*, is so more especially: I mean that which is revealed to a sinful and perishing World, with Respect to a Way of Salvation by a Redeemer; and which is indeed no other than the Gospel.

That was therefore good Advice of the wise Man, *Buy the Truth, and sell it not*: And that was a very excellent Saying of the great Apostle, *We can do nothing against the Truth, but for the Truth*.

Indeed there are many who are apt to make such a Profession, who cannot do it on so good Grounds as the holy Apostle did. But I remember a Saying of a very worthy Divine * to this Purpose, "That when so-
"ber Persons offer to prove by the Word of God what
"they say and maintain, we ought, in Honour to the

Mr. John Robinson.

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“divine Oracles, to shew so much Regard to them, as
“to examine into the Truth of what they so offer to
“confirm.”

However uncertain we may be with Respect to many Things, which we have a Call to take under Consideration; yet I think we may be very sure of this, that the best and wisest of Men, in their present lapsed State, *know but in Part, and prophesy but in Part*; and so had need carry themselves very humbly in all their Essays for the Investigation and Declaration of the Truth; and that the Truth being such an invaluable Treasure, as is above expressed, it ought not on any slighty Grounds to be parted with, and suffered to be lost. We are therefore sometimes called to *contend earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints*; and to be willing rather to suffer Reproaches, and other Evils, than that the Cause of Truth should suffer thro' our Neglect. That is, in a good Sense, a Truth concerning all Christians, but especially the Ministers of CHRIST, who are set for the Defence of the Gospel, and made Stewards of the Mysteries of God, viz. *For this End was I born, and for this Cause came I into the World, that I should bear Witness to the Truth.*

As for the following Essay, whatever Censure I may fall under on the Account of it, I think it has not been rashly undertaken, or engaged in; it being the Result of many Years serious Enquiry after the Truth; and I have in it endeavoured, in my poor Manner, to imitate the noble Bereans, who *received the Word with all Readiness of Mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those Things which they heard preached were so.*

I have been from my Youth naturally inclined to endeavour to understand what I believe; and why I believe this or that Proposition to be true: And yet I very readily acknowledge, That when any Proposition is evidently delivered in the Scriptures of Truth, I ought for that Reason to believe it to be true, tho' I cannot fully comprehend the same, and am not able to answer all Objections that can be made against it: But then I must be sure that it is indeed delivered in the divine Oracles,—in which Case every Tho't should be captivated to the Obedience of CHRIST.

In the little Reading for which I have had Leisure and Opportunity, I have been chiefly conversant in the Writings of *Calvinists*; yet I confess I have endeavoured not to be wholly ignorant of the Principles of those who embrace or incline to the *Arminian Hypothesis*; and have always preferred the Former as much the best of the Two: So that I cannot justly be looked upon as endeavouring to overthrow the First, and establish the Other. This is what I do not at all intend; but what I endeavour is, to remove some Things out of the Way, commonly asserted by *Calvinists*, which I think may be dismissed from their Hypothesis, being no Ways necessary in order to the Support of the principal Articles in that Scheme; but on the contrary, render it the more difficult to be received and defended. And what I to this End advance, I humbly submit to the Censure of the *Learned and Judicious*.

What is principally insisted on in this Essay, is, *That the Offer of Salvation made to Sinners in the Gospel, does comprise in it an Offer, or conditional Promise, of the Grace given in Regeneration.* I believe there is as really

really a conditional Offer of this made to sinful Men, in the Gospel of the Son of God, as there is of Pardon of Sin, Justification, &c. In this I think I differ from most that are in the *calvinian Scheme*: And I confess I was for many Years otherwise minded; but while I endeavoured to defend what I then believed, the Objections that offered themselves to my Mind against what I had admitted as true, prevailed on me first to doubt of it, and by Degrees to receive the Doctrine I now endeavour to defend: And if I make good what I assert, I think I do not therein diminish, but exalt God's Grace.

I for several Years endeavoured in a more private Way to get Satisfaction in these Points, wherein I was fallen into a Way of thinking somewhat different from many others, before I entertained any Tho'ts of publishing my Sentiments. I frequently discoursed with, and sometimes wrote to learned Divines, concerning the Matters here discoursed of; and had, I think, no Matter of Conviction that I was under any Mistakes; much less, that I had advanced any dangerous Errors. And I cannot deny but that some pious and learned Divines have spoken somewhat favourably of my Hypothesis; and have expressed their Willingness that I should, by the Press, *shew my Opinion*.

I have in this Essay, endeavoured not to provoke or offend any Person whatsoever; and now profess, that I greatly respect and honour those, whose Sentiments differ from some of mine, discovered in this Discourse: And I have therefore chosen rather to argue on the Things considered, than meddle with the Persons from whose Opinions I dissent.

And

And after all that I have said for the Support of my own Hypothesis, (in the Explanation of which I have endeavoured to be very free and open) I think I am fully resolved seriously to weigh every Thing that shall be offered for my Conviction, according to the best of my Skill and Judgment; and I hope if I am in an Error, my Fault is not unpardonable.

I also hope, that if I am wrong in any of my Sentiments, I have taken such Care to secure the fundamental Articles in the Doctrine of Grace, that Men's Souls will not be endangered by any Thing advanced in this Attempt to set some Things in a clearer Light than they seem to me to be set in, in such Books as I have had Opportunity to read; but it may be thro' my own Ignorance understand not.

I have not in this Essay had any Design against the Doctrine of Original Sin, God's eternal Decrees and Providence, the Difference betwixt common and special Grace, and the Sovereignty of God in the Affair of Man's Salvation. For according to my Hypothesis, as well as that I oppose, that is a great Truth maintained by the Apostle, Rom. ix. *It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy*——. These Things I not only allow, but occasionally endeavour to defend; tho' this not being my principal Design, I have not much enlarged on them: But my main Design is that above expressed.

That what I have attempted in this Treatise, may not appear to be useless to such as may please to read it, I have endeavoured to render it practical, by some useful Inferences from the Truths asserted in it.

Tho'

Tho' this Essay be more especially submitted to the Judgment and Censure of the *Learned*, yet I aim at the Good of all Mankind in it; and I have written it, and do consent to it's Publication, that I might *serve my own Generation by the Will of God*. If he approve my Attempt, he can easily give Success to it; if otherwise, I submit it to him, and say, *The Will of the LORD be done.*

I have unto the Body of the Treatise herewith emitted, prefixed the Contents of the general *Parts* and *Chapters* contained in it; of which I request my *Reader* to take a view, before he reads the Book itself, whereof he has therein the Sum. I desire my *Reader* also to read what I have written, in the Order in which it is penned, lest otherwise he should mistake my Meaning in some Things, which in this Discourse I have advanced; and therein prejudice both himself and me, who sincerely desire to serve him, and glorify the God of all Grace.

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E. Mayhew.





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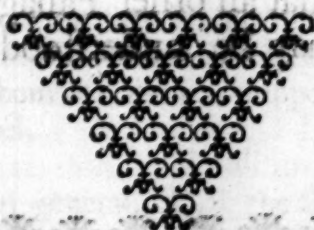
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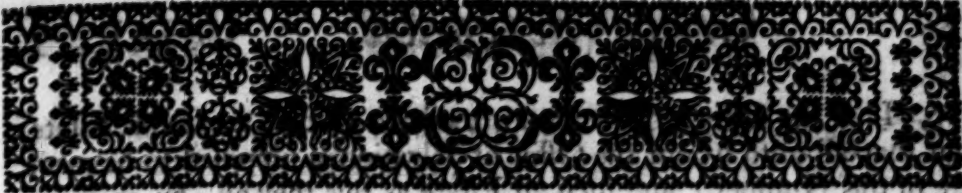


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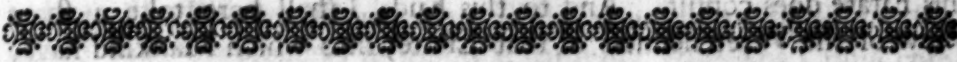
WHEREAS, in PART I. CHAP. I. Page 12. of this Essay, I have professed my Assent to what is asserted by the *Assembly of Divines at Westminster*, in their *Shorter Catechism*, viz. That “ The Covenant
“ being made with *Adam*, not only for himself, but
“ for his Posterity, all Mankind proceeding from him
“ by ordinary Generation, sinned in him, and fell with
“ him, in his first Transgression ; ” I have, on a Review of the Sheets printed off before the Writing of this *Advertisement*, chosen to express my Sense rather in the Words here following, than those of the Assembly referred to, viz. “ That the Covenant being made with
“ *Adam*, not for himself only, as an individual Person,
“ but for the whole human Species then in him, the
“ Consequence hereof was, that all Mankind proceeding from him by ordinary Generation, sinned in
“ him, and fell with him, in his first Transgression.

This being my true and only Sense in the Place referred to, I desire that all other Passages in the Book, of the like Import, may be understood with this Explanation.





GRACE Defended.



PART I.

The first Part of that Defence of the Grace of God which, in this Essay, I am attempting, is to shew,

That Sinners have, in the Gospel, an Offer of Salvation made to them.



CHAP. I.

Concerning those Sinners, and the State they are in, to whom the Offers of Salvation are here supposed to be made.



THAT we may understand what we say, and whereof we affirm, in this first Part of my Discourse, we must in the first Place consider, Who the Sinners are, and in what Condition, to whom Salvation is supposed to be offered in the Gospel.

To this then I say in general, That the Sinners here intended, are such as all Mankind fallen in *Adam*, by Nature, are; or as consider'd in that Estate, into which the Fall has brought them. I do not here

say, That the Offer of Salvation is made to all that are in this Estate; but that all unto whom the Offer of Salvation is supposed to be made, are of this Number; and such an Estate as this they all, by their Fall and Apostacy from God, have been plunged into.

Now, that this is a very miserable and wretched Estate, is by all *Calvinists* acknowledged; and in this I fully agree with them; and shall endeavour, as briefly as I can, to shew wherein the Misery of this Estate does consist. And to this End, I shall here take a short View of the Wretchedness of that Estate, into which Mankind have, by their Apostacy, brought themselves.

To this End, the first Thing I shall observe, is, That the Sin of our first Parents in eating the forbidden Fruit, was exceeding great and heinous. It was a Sin against an expresse and positive Command of God, immediately and plainly given to them by God himself, to which they were, on their Peril, required to yield Obedience, *Gen. 2. 17.* So that it was a Sin against Light and Knowledge, and a very presumptuous Sin. It was also a Sin against the most endearing Discoveries of the Goodness of God to them. God had newly created them in his own *Image* and *Likeness*, *Gen. 1. 26, 27.* and in his Favour, with Dominion over the Works of his Hands; and had plainly enough, for them to understand, promised Life to them on Condition of their Obedience to him; tho' this Promise was only implied in the contrary Threatning, *Gen. 2. 17.* They wanted not Power to keep this Commandment; but might have continued in their Obedience to it, if they had watched and prayed, that they might not have fallen into *Temptation*; and endeavoured to withstand *the same*: This, I think, none will deny. They had no Need to eat of the Fruit forbidden them, having Plenty enough besides, no other Trees in that rich and plentiful Garden being denied to them. They had no Need, nor Warrant, to seek after a better Condition, at present, than that they were in. They had, no doubt, before they had sinned, enjoyed happy Communion with God, and one with another. They had no Warrant to hold a Parly with the Serpent endeavouring to entice them from their Obedience and Allegiance to their Creator and sovereign Lord; much less to believe him in what he said, in direct Opposition to that God that cannot Lie; and follow his Conduct, in direct Opposition to the divine Command.

It was enough for them that God had created them in his own Image, in Respect of Knowledge, Righteousness and Holiness. They should not have aspired to have been more like God in Knowledge, than he made them, or rather to be equal to him, as in *Gen. 2. 5, 6.*

Nor

Nor should they have taken Part with the Devil to this End. Thus heinous was their Transgression; and much more might here be said. This is that Sin of Adam, which is, by Calvinists, supposed to be imputed to his Posterity, which I, at present, take for granted, but may consider hereafter.

What I shall here next mention, shall be some of the immediate and necessary Effects, or Consequents of this now mentioned heinous Sin: I mean such Consequents as follow'd naturally from the Crime committed, without any Consideration of the Threatning denounced, in Case of Disobedience: That shall anon be considered. Now this could not but produce extraordinary Shame and Horror, unless God had (which was not the Case) given up the Offenders to a most unaccountable Stupidity. I suppose God had a Design to make the Promise of the Seed that was to break the Serpent's Head, Gen. 3. 15. very welcome to them.

We may accordingly see what Shame and Confusion of Face seized on them, Gen. 3. 7, 8, 9, 10. *And the Eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed Fig-Leaves together, and made themselves Aprons. And they heard the Voice of the Lord God, walking in the Garden, in the Cool of the Day: And Adam and his Wife hid themselves from the Presence of the Lord God, among the Trees of the Garden. And God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy Voice in the Garden: And I was afraid; because I was naked, and I hid my self.* Nor did the Shame or Confusion which these Offenders were thus in, arise wholly, (if principally) from the Threatning that had been denounced; but very much, (especially their Shame) from a Sense of the most vile Wickedness whereof they had been guilty. This seems evident from the Question God put to Adam, ver. 11. *And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the Tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat.*

So heinous was this Offence, which was by these committed, that they could not but be in great Horror on the Account of it; tho' they had tho't nothing of the Evil threatned against them. Nor could they have had any great Reason to hope for a Pardon, tho' they had never been threatned; and tho' they could not have known what Punishment God would have laid on them: And yet I acknowledge, there would not have been Ground for utter Despair.

I shall therefore now come to consider their Guilt, as this signifies an Obligation lying on them to bear the Punishment due to them by

Virtue of that Sanction of the Law, *In the Day thou eat'st thereof, thou shalt surely die.* Guilt, I think, may be taken, either for a Person's being truly chargeable with some Sin or Crime; and this the Persons were, of whom I here speak, of which before: Or it may be taken for that Obligation, by which the Offender is bound to suffer the Penalty due to him for his Offence; and this is that which I am here to consider in the Case before me. What was intended by the Death threatned, I am not yet come to take an Account of; but the Nature of the Obligation, and the Consequences thence arising, is what, at present, I am upon: And this is express'd in such strong Terms in the Text mentioned, that the Offenders, I think, had no Grounds given them to hope that the Sentence might be reversed. I mean, they had not, before *the Seed of the Woman* was promised, *Gen. 3. 15.* No wonder then that the Offenders were in such a Plight as they were, *Gen. 3. 11.*

The Covenant of Works was doubtless given to be a standing Rule, according to which God was resolved to deal with Mankind; and by which he obliged himself to give them Life, in Case of constant and perfect Obedience to him, and assured them that they should die in Case of the least Failure or Disobedience, as by comparing *Gen. 2. 17.* with *Gal. 3. 10, 12.* and *James 2. 10.* does appear. And God was pleased to try Man's Obedience in one single Instance, before they had committed any other Offence against him. Now on this Trial, they most vilely forsook their Allegiance to him, and wickedly rebell'd against him: Which, having done, for any Thing that did appear, there was nothing to be expected, but the Execution of the threatned Sentence on them. They were for the present bound over, as the fallen Angels were, with whom they had joined against God, *unto the Judgment of the great Day*; and had no Reason to expect any Thing better than what, in the Threatning, God had denounced against them.

The Day of their Probation was now ended, and the Covenant broken betwixt them and the great God, and no Repentance or Obedience was by that Covenant now requir'd of them: Nor had they any other Relation to it, than that of capital Offenders, doom'd to present Death by it: Nor was there yet any Way of Escape propos'd to them; nor, as far as did appear, any Room for God to treat with them, or they with him, on any Terms of Reconciliation whatsoever.

This was the State in which Mankind now were, and they doubtless were sensible how Matters stood betwixt God and them; and they had Reason to be filled with Dread and Amazement, as it seems they

they were. Nor had they any Room or Hearts to beg for a Pardon. What a terrible Condition was this? They were, in Respect of the Sentence pronounc'd against them, as dead Men, as soon as ever they had sinned.

But the Misery of these Transgressors will further appear, if we consider what that Death was, which, by the Sanction of the Law, they were thus bound over unto. And this I shall now proceed to shew; only I shall here first observe, that the Death threatned against these Transgressors did not, properly speaking, consist at all in the Obligation they were under to suffer it. For tho' such as are under a Sentence of Death, are sometimes spoken of as dead Men, as was before observed; yet there is a Difference between Men's being under a Sentence of Death, and their actually dying; or betwixt a Judgment pass'd on them, and the Execution of it: However, a Sentence of Death is very terrible.

And now I may, without any further Delay, shew what Death these Malefactors were by the Law of God sentenced unto. I say then, *these* were, by the Threatning annexed to the Law of God, Sentenced to undergo a threefold Death, which I shall speak something concerning in the Order now to be expressed. And,

1. The *first* Kind of Death intended in the Threatning, undoubtedly was that which we commonly call *Death spiritual*.

That Mankind are by Nature spiritually dead, the Scriptures abundantly testify: And for the clearing up of what I here assert, I shall shew (1.) Wherein this Death does consist. (2.) That this came on our first Parents as a Punishment of their Sin, in eating the forbidden Fruit.

(1.) Let us consider wherein this Death consisteth. Now to this I say, that this Death consisteth in the Loss of the Image of God, which Man was created in, *Gen. 1. 26, 27.* or that Rectitude or Integrity, of which he was the Subject, when he was in that Estate wherein he was created. *Eccl. 7. 29. God made Man upright.* This did not consist in the Essence of Man's Soul; for if it had, he could not have lost it: But it consisted in that habitual Conformity of the Soul to the holy Nature and Will of God, which was con-created with it, and was the Bond of its Union with God, while Man enjoy'd it; *for he that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit with him, 1 Cor. 6. 17.* This was Man's Life, while he was in a State of Innocency;

Innocency ; and is so again, when he is renewed in Knowledge and Righteousness after the Image of him that created him, Col. 3. 10. Men destitute of it are said to be alienated from the Life of God, Eph. 4. 18. To be without this is Death, Rom. 8. 6. This Principle of Life is in Scripture call'd the divine Nature, 2 Pet. 1. 4. The Seed of God, 1 John 3. 9. Those who have it not, have not eternal Life abiding in them, ver. 15. but on the contrary, are dead in Sins, and in the Uncircumcision of the Flesh, Col. 2. 13. When such are said to be dead ; and when their Deprivation of such a divine Principle is called Death ; these Expressions are, I acknowledge, metaphorical ; and the Metaphor is taken from the Likeness which there is, in some Respects, betwixt a proper Death and this. Men, in this Estate, being as incapable of performing any Actions that are truly spiritual and holy, as Men naturally dead are of performing the Actions to which natural Life is required, Rom. 8. 6, 7, 8. *For to be carnally minded is Death : But to be spiritually minded is Life and Peace ; because the carnal Mind is Enmity against God : For it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the Flesh cannot please God.* 1 Cor. 2. 14. *But the natural Man receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God, for they are Foolishness unto him : Neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* This Death does not, properly speaking, consist either in Men's doing that which they should not, or in omitting or neglecting that which they should do ; but in their Want of such a Principle as is necessary to their doing that which is, in a strict Sense, holy and good ; and in a right Manner avoiding to do the contrary, i. e. from a Hatred of it, and a Love to that which is good. This, I think, is too plain to need any Illustration. Thus briefly of this Kind of Death.

(2.) I am to shew, That this came on our *first Parents*, as a Punishment of their Sin, and that it belong'd to the Death threatned. I say our *first Parents* ; for as yet I consider not how their Posterity became in this Sense dead. That *Adam* and *his Wife* were thus dead, immediately after they had committed their first and great Offence, I think to be an evident Truth. If they had remained habitually holy after they had committed their first Sin, they would certainly have carried themselves far otherwise than they did. They would not have attempted to hide themselves from God, as they endeavoured to do, Gen. 3. 8. In which they discovered much Atheism, and very wrong Thoughts of God, from whose Presence it is impossible to hide, Jer. 23. 24. Psal. 39. 8,---12.) instead of lamenting and confessing their heinous Offence, and justifying God, as by the Law of their Creation,

Creation, (but not as a Covenant of Works) they were obliged to do. They most wickedly endeavoured to justify themselves, and cast the Blame of their Fall on the God that made them, ver. 12, 13. So that by this Carriage of their's, they gave Occasion for such a Reflection on them as that in Job 31. 33. *If I covered my Transgression as Adam, by hiding mine Iniquity in my Bosom.* Does it not now appear, that *these* had, immediately after their Fall, a very corrupt Nature in them? And indeed, if by *Adam's* first Offence all Mankind were made in this Sense Sinners, as in *Rom. 5. 12*, and ver. 19. how can it be thought possible that he should himself escape becoming such an One, when he had committed that heinous Transgression?

But we must a little consider how this came to be the Consequence of our first Parents committing their first and great Offence. And here I will shew, *first* negatively, from whence this did not arise; and *secondly* positively, what was the Cause of it.

1. Negatively, I say, This did not flow wholly nor principally from the natural Influence of that Sin, which they had newly committed. Tho' sinful Actions naturally produce and increase an Inclination or Disposition to sin yet more; and if they be often repeated, they beget a strong Habit, inclining the Transgressors to go on still in their wicked Courses, as in *Jer. 13. 23*. Yet the Sin of these Persons could not alone utterly eradicate all pious Dispositions out of their Souls. Sinful Actions diverse Times repeated would scarce of itself have done this; much less could one single Act of Disobedience have had such an Influence, if there had been nothing else in the Case; but *Adam* might, and it is very probable he would, this notwithstanding, have bitterly bewail'd his Fall, and earnestly begg'd the Pardon of it; and perhaps have obtain'd it, and then had grown more watchful and circumspect in his after Conversation, as is often the Case of good Men now: But it was far from being thus with him; Sin had immediately Dominion over him, and reigned in him. Wherefore,

2. The Reason hereof was this, God having threatned he should surely die in the Day he sinned; and being greatly provoked at him for the horrible Wickedness he had committed, (of which before) did immediately begin to execute the Sentence on him, which he was now fallen under: And this he did in the first Place, by utterly taking his holy Spirit from him; the Consequence of which was, that he immediately, and without any positive Act of God, insus'd any sinful Dispositions

Dispositions into him, became a most vile Miscreant ; a Child of the Devil, full of all Wickedness.

If we consider these Things following, it will appear that it must needs have been so. (1.) God had obliged himself by his Word immediately to slay him, if he sinned against him, with this only Reserve in his own Breast, unless a Mediator should interpose to offer Satisfaction for his Offence, and reprieve him from present Destruction. We know certainly by the Event, that there was this Exception ; and the Apostle shews plainly, in *Rom. 3. 25, 26.* that God could not in Justice have spared him, in any other Way. The Threatning was absolute, and express'd in the strongest Terms ; and was to be immediately executed. To imagine it only shew'd what the Crime deserved, seems to me to be most vain. (2.) Man being in such a State of Condemnation, it would not consist with either the essential, or rectoral Holiness of God, to hold any such Communion with him, as he does, and will hold, with such as are his Friends and Favourites. He was a Traitor against the King of Heaven, and by Law condemned to Death for his Crime. How can we now imagine, that God might, while he was under this Sentence, deal with him as with a Friend and dear Child, with whom he was at Peace, when yet he was under his Wrath. (3.) Yet it must have been thus, if *Adam* after his falling under a Sentence of Death, had remained a holy Man still, being still endowed with God's Image, tho' but in such a Measure, as the least of Saints now are. If *Adam*, after his Fall, had had but a Spark of true Holiness remaining in his Soul, he must still have had holy Communion with the blessed God ; and God with him : That must have still been the Language of his Soul, in *Psal. 73. 25. Whom have I in Heaven but thee ? And there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee :* And of God, with Respect to him, it might have been truly said, as in *Psal. 147. 11. The Lord taketh Pleasure in them that fear him.* This cannot be denied to hold true with Respect to all such as truly fear God. Now it was impossible that *Adam* should have enjoyed such Favours, while under a Sentence of Damnation. It followeth (4.) That our first Parents being fallen under a Sentence of Death, could no longer enjoy those Influences of the Spirit of God, by which their habitual Holiness might be preserved ; or, in other Words, they could not have remained *Temples of the Holy Ghost* ; but must needs have been utterly and immediately deserted by him. That must and did now befall him, which *David* so earnestly deprecated, in *Psal. 51. 11. Cast me not away from thy Presence : And take not thy holy Spirit from me.* And being thus forsaken, they were indeed

no better than the fallen Angels, with whom they had joined in their Rebellion against the holy God. Being thus wholly dead in Sin, spiritually dead, they were in this Respect Vessels of Wrath fitted for Destruction.

I desire it may be here remembred, and laid up in our Minds, to be recollected and improv'd, That the spiritual Death, of which I have been speaking, did not precede, or go before, that Sentence of Death, *Gen. 2. 17.* but belong'd to the Death there threatned, as the Wages of Sin, even of *Adam's* actual Transgression, in eating the forbidden Fruit; because from hence it followeth, that this Sentence of Death must be taken off from the Sinner, before spiritual Life can be again restored to him.

Before I pass to the next Head, I shall here briefly observe, that as this spiritual Death did not properly consist in *Adam's* first Transgression, but was a Fruit of it; so neither does it properly consist in those actual Transgressions which Sinners in a State of Nature do commit; but is the Fountain from which they flow, *Matth. 15. 19.* and *Luke 6. 43, 45, 46.*

Let it be here also observed, that the Dominion which Man's spiritual Enemies had over him after his Fall, tho' comprised or implied in the Death threatned to be executed on him; yet was it not properly Part of that spiritual Death, of which I have been now speaking: But Man's first Sin, and the spiritual Death that followed thereon, was what has given the Enemies of Men's Souls, such an Advantage as they have over all those who are dead in Sin. Of the great Power of these Enemies over such as are *dead in Sins and Trespasses*, we have an Account, *Eph. 2. 2. 2 Tim. 2. 26.* and elsewhere.

2. The second Kind of Death mentioned, as threatned against our first Parents, in Case they eat the forbidden Fruit, was *Death temporal*: By which I understand Death, properly so called, viz. the Separation of Soul and Body one from the other; of which Death we have a Description in *Eccl. 12. 7.* That this Kind of Death was intended in the Threatning, we have Reason to think; for (1.) This is Death, in the most proper and literal Sense of the Word, and so is most justly supposed to be here meant; there being no good Reason to be given to the contrary. (2.) This Kind of Death is expressly mentioned in the Judgment God passed on *Adam* after he had sinned, *Gen. 3. 19.* (3.) *Adam* did, and his Off-spring do, generally die this Kind of Death. (4.) Tho' all Men, without Exception, do not thus die, this does not prove, that *Adam* was not threatned with this Kind of

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Death; because their escaping it may be supposed to be owing to the Interposition of a Mediator. I could give other Reasons for this, if it were needful.

For the same Reason that some Men die not at all, *Adam* did not die as soon as he had sinned, viz. the Interposition of a Mediator, to offer Satisfaction for Sin, and relieve him from present Death, and this in order to his eternal Salvation.

I know many think otherwise, not understanding the Threatning, *Gen. 2. 17.* as I do, but holding the Meaning to be, That *Adam* should, as soon as he had sinned, become mortal, grow sickly and infirm, and should at last give up the Ghost; and I grant, that, as Things have been since ordered, with Relation to sinful Men, this Exposition seems to agree well with the Event. But we ought to distinguish betwixt the real Intention and Design of God, the Law-giver, and the true Meaning of his Law. The Question here is not, What God really intended to do, in Case *Adam* sinn'd? But, What must be done in Case the Threatning should be executed according to the true Meaning of it? And consequently, what *Adam* was to expect if he eat the forbidden Fruit?

Now there is no Question to me, but that the Meaning of the Threatning was, That our first Parents should immediately die a proper Death, in Case they sinned; only God did not so threaten this, as not to leave Room to have the Execution delay'd, in Case of the Interposition of a Mediator; yea, and to have it finally remitted, in Case full Satisfaction should be given for the Offence. This has been made evident in the Event: But for all this, the true Meaning of the Law might be, That *Adam* should die in the Day he sinned, with the Exception only now expressed.

And it is certain, that this is the most proper and literal Sense of the Threatning, in the Place referred to, and so what we ought not to recede from, unless by some urgent Necessity we are compell'd to it; which I hope I shall make it appear, that we are not, when I come to speak of the Imputation of *Adam's* first Sin to his Posterity; and shew how they partake of the Guilt, and become liable to the Punishment of that great Offence; which Doctrine, I suppose, the Hypothesis I here proceed on, is no Ways inimical unto; but that it does, on the contrary, greatly favour it. I therefore now proceed to shew,

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3. What the third Death was, which *Adam* was threatned with, in Case of Disobedience : And to this I say, That eternal Punishment in another Life and World was doubtless intended in the Threatning : For which I give the following Reasons.

1. Since Life eternal was by Promise engaged to him, in Case of Obedience, such a Promise being implied in the Threatning denounced ; so that *Adam* was to have enjoy'd positive Happiness, and that forever, on the mentioned Condition ; it seemeth not reasonable to think, that an eternal Punishment of Pain and Grief was not intended in the threatned Death : For thus the Evil threatned had not, in its Nature and Duration, been commensurate with the Good promised. That, in the Threatning of Death, a Promise of Life was implied, will not, I suppose, be denied : And this Life must needs have been the same, or a better than that which *Adam* then enjoy'd in the Garden of Eden, which none can deny to have been a Life of positive Happiness. Had *Adam* continued in his Obedience, he would have been greatly deceived, if he had ever been deprived of that Happiness, and not had a greater given to him.

2. A Supposition of *Adam's* not being in a miserable State, after this Life, having sinned, and being deprived of all Happiness, necessarily implieth the Mortality of his Soul. For unto what End should he be continued in Being, if he were to be neither happy nor miserable ? And how inconsistent is this with the Nature of a rational Being, capable of Happiness, and desirous of it ? For such an one to be without it, must needs be a Torment to him. Therefore, to deny that *Adam* must have been miserable after this Life, is, in effect, to deny, that his Soul should have survived, when his Body should have returned to the Dust ; as in *Gen.* 3. 19. and *Eccl.* 12. 7. Now, if *Adam's* Soul was mortal, why not other Men's too ? Contrary to *Matth.* 10. 28. and *Luke* 16. 22.

3. The Scriptures, by opposing that Death, which is the Wages of Sin, to Life eternal, do sufficiently intimate to us, that that Death is eternal ; so in *Rom.* 6. 22. *The Wages of Sin is Death ; but the Gift of God is eternal Life.* Now, can there be any Reason to question, whether *Adam* was to die such a Death ? Was not the Death threatned against him, the Wages of a most vile Transgression ? The Death which he was to die, was doubtless the same which those are freed from, who believe in Jesus Christ, *John* 3. 16. The Seed of the Woman, *Gen.* 3. 16. was doubtless promised to save *Adam* and

others from this Death, call'd *the Wrath to come*, 1 Thes. 1. 10. *Jesus which delivereth us from the Wrath to come.* The same is called *the second Death*, Rev. 20. 6. Should not *Adam* have died this Death as well as others, if he had not been redeemed by *Jesus Christ*? Is not this Death included in that which entred into the World by *Adam's* first Offence; Rom. 5. 12. And if so, was not he himself liable to it? No doubt it was the same with that everlasting Punishment which the damned are sent into, Matth. 25. 46. *These shall go away into everlasting Punishment; but the Righteous into Life eternal.*

Having now considered the woful Effects and Consequents of our first Parents first and great Transgression, as these related to themselves, personally considered; I shall now proceed to consider them, as they related to their Children or Off-spring. And here, I take it for granted, (and do my self believe, as in the shorter Catechism of the Assembly of Divines at *Westminster*;) That, "the Covenant being made with *Adam*, not for himself only, but for his Posterity, all Mankind proceeding from him, by ordinary Generation, sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first Transgression."

Now here I might have concluded the first Chapter, in this first Part of my Essay; (my Design in it not being to prove those Things wherein I and others with whom I therein have to do, are agreed) but because of the great Importance of the Doctrine asserted, in Respect of the Influence, Men's different Apprehensions about it will necessarily have on their Principles, concerning several other Points of Religion, I shall endeavour to give my Readers such an Explanation of this great Truth, as I apprehend to be most agreeable to the Oracles of God, and, as I think, will have a Tendency to remove some of the Prejudices, which the Minds of many are apt to fill'd with against it; but will endeavour to say Nothing but what will be co-incident with it.

And in the first Place, I suppose the Covenant, in these Words referred to, is that of Works, made with Man, while he was in a State of Innocency; and that this is the same that God made with our first Parents, Gen. 2. 17. wherein he forbid them to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, on pain of Death: In which Threatning of Death, there was a Promise of Life, in Case of Obedience, plainly implied. God was pleased in this Precept or Prohibition to try Man's Obedience to him, as in a particular Instance; and in his Transgression of this, that was verified, Jam. 2. 10. *Whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one Point, he is guilty of all.*

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Adam, i. e. Man, with whom this Covenant is said to have been made, was not *Adam* only, as that Name is sometimes strictly taken for the Person of the first Man, but for *Adam*, or Man, taken collectively, i. e. the whole Species of Mankind, Male and Female, as in *Gen.* 1. 28. *Job* 28. 28. *Eve* therefore rightly understood herself to be included in it, *Gen.* 3. 2, 3. Thus, tho' *Adam* was personally spoken to, yet it really did include his Posterity also; and there was the more Reason that it should do so, because the whole Species of Mankind did then exist in the two Persons, with whom at first it was more immediately made. The Persons of their Off-spring did not then, indeed, personally subsist, but the whole human Nature, and all that was essential to it, did; and so all those that were by God's Command and Benediction to be propagated in the Way of natural Generation, by or from our first Parents. They have Nothing in them but what essentially belong'd to these. They are only *Adam* multiplied, according to God's Ordinance, above mentioned. And *Adam's* Children being of the same Nature and Make as he was, would undoubtedly have done as he did, if they had been put on the same Trial.

But I do not say, that *Adam's* Off-spring being in this Sense in him was that which constituted him their legal Head and Representative. It was their being comprehended in the Covenant that did this; and that they were so appears by their being made Sinners by *Adam's* one Offence, *Rom.* 5. 12,---19. If they had not been intended in the Threatning, as well as our first Parents themselves, the same Death had not come on them for the same Offence, as it plainly appears it did; tho' it was the more congruous that they should be comprehended in the Covenant because they were *Adam's* Posterity, and he their natural Head; yet that they are affected, as they are, by his Sin and Fall, does immediately arise and flow from their being comprehended in the Covenant, as they most certainly were.

It appears from what has been now said, That *Adam's* Posterity were in him in a two-fold Respect. (1.) They were in him in a natural Sense, as Branches are naturally in their Root or Stock, before they grow out of it. (2.) They were in him in a relative and moral Sense, as he was their appointed Head and Representative: And I acknowledge, that without being in him in this latter Sense, they could not have sinned in him and fallen with him in his first Transgression. And this is the Reason why Children now are not chargeable with the Sins of their immediate Parents. God has not appointed their immediate Parents to be their moral Head or Representative.

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The Covenant being thus made with *Adam* for his Posterity as well as himself, he virtually represented them, before they actually subsisted; so that his Carriage, before they had, in this Sense, any Being, would affect their Persons as soon as they should exist. And since he represented none, but what were in the Way of natural Generation to descend from him, none could partake with him in his Guilt, and the Death threatned, 'till in this Way they had a Being: And consequently, if it had so fallen out, that none had ever been bro't into the World, in the Way mentioned, then none should ever have suffered any Pain or Torment, in Case of his eating of the forbidden Tree; because such Suffering supposeth the Existence of the Persons suffering: And the same will hold with Respect to the Reward of his Obedience, had he not sinned: His Posterity having the Advantage of it, did necessarily suppose, that, in order to it, they must first exist.

Now Things standing thus, betwixt the blessed God and Mankind, before *Adam's* Fall; and *Adam* having then Power to have continued in that State of Integrity, wherein he was created; and being liable withal to fall from it, by eating the forbidden Fruit, so, that, according to the Nature of second Causes, either of these might come to pass, and one or the other of them would certainly do so: We may briefly consider the Effects or Consequents of each of these supposed Events; but must here consider these with Relation to that Covenant which Man was then in, without any Relation to the Covenant of Grace made with Man after his Sin and Fall; and thus we shall see how Things must have been, in either of these Cases, had no Mediator been provided.

And here first let us suppose, that *Adam* had stood and not eaten of the forbidden Tree. When I here make this Supposition, by *Adam's* continuing in his Obedience, I mean his having done so during that Time which God had allotted for the Trial of his Obedience to that positive Ordinance of his; on *Adam's* Observation of which, his own and his Off-spring's Happiness did depend: But how long a Time this was to have been, I cannot determine. God did not, in the Covenant made with *Adam*, limit any certain Time for this, but kept his Mind to himself: Only we know, that in Case of Sin, the Time was out as soon as it should be committed. But how long Man must have continued in his Obedience, before he should, on the Terms of that Covenant, have had a Title to Life, I cannot say: But I think it is very probable, that if *Adam* had not fallen before he had

had any Issue; God would not have permitted his falling into that Sin afterwards. For, on this Supposition, it seems, that some of his Off-spring would have been born in a State of Sin and others not, (should he have had any after his Fall) which, I think, would not agree with the great End which God aimed at in this whole Affair, of which we have an Account, *Rom. 3. 19.* and most plainly in *Rom. 11. 32. God hath concluded them all in Unbelief, that he might have Mercy on all.*

And to me it is not at all improbable, that if our first Parents had endured that first Shock, by which they fell into Sin, God would have confirmed them in a State of Innocency, and not have suffered another Assault to be made on them. I know of no Reason to conclude, that he would not have done thus; and that, on this Supposition, Adam and his Off-spring would have been happy for ever.

It is here supposed that if our first Parents had not sinned, they would have had a Posterity in the World. That Command and Benediction of God given to them, *Gen. 1. 28.* will not admit of the least Doubt of this: And that, on this Supposition, Adam's Posterity should none of them ever have seen Death, I think unquestionable. Nor do I imagine, that they would all have lived in this little World forever; but suppose it more than likely, that after they had for a Time serv'd their Generation by the Will of God, they would have been translated into the heavenly World, as *Enoch* and *Elijah* * were, and as the Saints that shall be alive on the Earth, at the second Coming of our Lord †, will be.

Thus far have I considered how it would have fared with Adam's Off-spring, on Supposition of his keeping the first Covenant; I shall now consider what the Effects and Consequents of his breaking that Covenant must have been, according to the Tenor of it; and if a Mediator had not interposed to offer a Price of Redemption for these Offenders: Of which more afterwards. And to this I must say, that I am fully of Opinion, that in this Case the Transgressors must have been immediately slain. Judgment must have been speedily executed on them, there being no Reason or Room for delaying it.

I am sensible, that in this I differ from many wise and learned Men, whose Opinion is, that the Threatning denounced *Gen. 2. 17.* did not intend that the Offenders should immediately suffer a temporal or proper Death; but that they should immediately become frail and

* *Gen. 5. 24. Heb. 11. 5. 2 Kings 2. 11. † 2 Thes. 4. 17.*
mortal;

mortal; and should in the Time appointed by God, give up the Ghost. But, premising all due Regards to those from whom I differ in this, I shall say something to each of these Hypotheses, that we may the better judge which of them is most agreeable to the Scriptures and the Discoveries we have of the Mind of God in them.

And first, with Respect to what I hold, I have these Things to say.

1. That what I plead for seems much better to agree with the plain Sense of the Threatning, than that which I dislike. The Threatning is very express and positive on my Side, and the Terms used very strong and emphatical. *In the Day thou eatest thou shalt surely die*, or, *shall die the Death*. Now I have already shewed, that a temporal or proper Death is intended in the Words, as well as a Death spiritual and eternal. And all the Kinds of Death intended were, without Exception, by the Words of the Threatning, to be inflicted on the very Day in which the Crime was committed. Nor have we any Liberty or Licence given us to leave, or recede from, the plain and literal Sense of God's Word, unless by some urgent Necessity we are compell'd to it. This was the ordinary Sense in which the Word *Death* was used, when *Moses* wrote the History of Man's Creation and Fall, and no doubt long before that Time. Nor is there any Reason to doubt but that *Moses* would use a Word to express the Thing intended in the Threatning, in the same Sense that God did therein use it.

2. By *Adam's* Carriage after he had transgressed it seems that he expected present Death. When *Adam* and *Eve* had sinned, they were afraid, and hid themselves among the Trees of the Garden, *Gen.* 3. ver. 8, and 10. They acted like Persons that expected to be slain as soon as they should be taken; and no doubt they did so. And it is not to be questioned, but that they understood the Meaning of the Threatning.

3. That God did not immediately execute these Malefactors, is no Argument at all, that the Sanction of the Law did not intend it, any more than that the Law against High Treason does not intend that a Person committing that Crime, shall be put to Death for it; because the King is pleased to reprieve and pardon him. We may well distinguish between the Meaning of the Law and the Intention of the Prince, whose Law it is. The proper Sense and Meaning of that Law, *Gen.* 2. 17. might be, That our first Parents should die a proper

proper Death, on the very Day they sinned ; and yet upon the Interposition of a Mediator to offer Satisfaction for their Crime, in order to their being reconciled to God, they might be reprieved from the present Stroke of Death, and might, instead thereof, have Conditions of Peace proposed to them. Thus God might be gracious, and say, *Deliver them from going down into the Pit ; I have found a Ransom*, as in Job 33. 24. and this I believe was the Case. It greatly favours this, that God would pass no Sentence on our first Parents, after they had sinned, 'till he had first promised a Saviour, *the Seed of the Woman* that was to *break the Serpent's Head* ; as appears Gen. 3. 15,---19. Had it not been for this, these Transgressors must have had quite another Sentence passed on them, *viz.* a Sentence of present Death and eternal Damnation.

Some have objected against what I here plead for, That, on this Hypothesis, the World had at once been deprived of all its humane Inhabitants, tho' it was made for the Use of Mankind : And I readily acknowledge this to be true, and know of no Absurdity implied in it ; for if it had been so, God could easily have provided others to fill up the Room of those Wretches, who, for sinning against him, had been destroy'd. " God (saith Dr. Twisse *) could have destroyed Adam " after his Sin, and made another Author of Generation of Man- " kind. " But he never intended it should come to this. He knew how to save the Offenders from that present Destruction which they deserv'd ; and to suffer them, in the Way which he had before prescribed to them, to replenish the Earth with Inhabitants, tho' this was not the Intention of the Threatning before mentioned, in Case Adam had sinned before he had any Issue ; and so could not have been done if a Way to satisfy the Law had not been found out.

The Supposition which I have endeavoured to defend, being allow'd to be a Truth, as I think it ought to be, it will from thence follow, That if our first Parents committed their first and great Transgression before they had any Children, as they certainly did, then no Posterity of theirs could, according to the Tenor of the Covenant of Works, suffer any Pain or Torment, on the Account of their first Offence, in eating the forbidden Fruit. The Reason of this is obvious, *viz.* because they could not have any. If they had none before they sinned, before they could have none afterwards, being to die on that very Day,---I say, this follows, according to the Tenor of the Covenant of

* *Riches of GOD's Love to Vessels of Mercy*, Part 2d, Page 198.

Works, and supposing the Threatning annexed to that Covenant had been executed on the Persons of the Transgressors, according to the genuine Sense and Meaning of it. For otherwise they might have, yea, actually had, a numerous Issue, and these all bro't into the World in a State of Sin and Death, as I shall by and by shew; and by what Means this came to pass, with the Advantages of allowing that this was brought about in the Way here intended.

But, before I come to this I shall observe, that tho' *Adam* could not, on this Supposition insisted on, have had an Off-spring to suffer positive Pain and Torment on the Account of his first Sin; yet he might, by transgressing the Covenant he was then under, hinder an Off-spring, which he should otherwise have had, from enjoying very great and good Things, which, had he not sinned, they might and should have enjoyed. Our first Parents were by Nature, capable of propagating their Kind, and had not only God's Allowance, but Command and Benediction to that End, *Gen.* 1. 28. and if they had continued in their Obedience to God, they would most certainly have had a large Off-spring in the World, all of which would have been brought into it in a very happy Estate, as I have before shewed. Now, by their Sin, they at once hindred both the Being and Happiness of all *these*, consider'd with Relation to the Covenant of Works. And thus *these* were great Loosers by *Adam's* Fall, (if I may speak of Not-Beings, as is usual, in such Language as we speak of Things that do exist) They were Loosers, I say, by being hinder'd from coming into the World, and that in so happy a Condition, as they must and would have come into it in, if the Sin of *Adam* had not prevented it. And tho' they could not have complained of this Wrong, if they had never been; yet since they are bro't into the World by Means of the Mediation of the Son of God, they can see and complain of the Injury done them by their first Parents, in hindring them from being born in a State of Innocency and Happiness.

By what has been said it appears, That *Adam's* Posterity were, according to the Tenor of the Covenant of Works, much affected one Way or other by his Carriage or Behaviour while he was in a State of Probation. If he had not sinned, he would have had an Off-spring who would have been exceeding happy: But by sinning against God, he excluded them (as well as himself) from that Happiness, which otherwise they must and should have enjoy'd. He prevented them from living a happy Life in this World, and from being Heirs of everlasting Glory in the World to come. Our first
Parents

Parents did, by their first and great Offence, virtually cut off all their Off-spring before they were born. As these virtually sinned in them when they sinned, so they had virtually died in them (a proper Death I mean) if they had died; tho' the Threatning of the Covenant of Works had been executed only on the Persons of those who actually transgressed.

Having now briefly consider'd my own Hypothesis, with the Effects or Consequents of it; I shall proceed a little to examine that which stands in Opposition to it, *viz.* That our first Parents were not, according to the Tenor of the Covenant of Works, to be immediately put to Death, in Case they sinned; but were, according to the Nature of that Covenant to be permitted to live some Time in the World (tho' a very frail and troublesome Life) and to propagate a numerous Issue of sinful Creatures like themselves, and these all to be brought into the World in a State of Sin, being full of all Enmity and Wickedness, mere incarnate Devils; and being with those evil Spirits joined in their Rebellion against the King of Heaven; being also with them in utter Despair of any Mercy from God, *bound in Chains of Darknes to the Judgment of the great Day*; and yet going on to propagate their Kind, great Numbers still dying to make Room for more such Wretches as themselves, 'till the whole Number of *Adam's* sinful Off-spring should be filled up, and then all of this Race, not one excepted, our first Parents with all their Posterity, at the final Judgment, sent away into everlasting Torment with the Devil and his Angels, as in *Matth. 25. 46.* But observe, that this supposeth that there had been no Redeemer provided; and that God had dealt with Man according to the Tenor of the Covenant of Works.

And let it be here consider'd, that on this Supposition, this dreadful Destruction of all the Posterity of *Adam* must have been wholly owing to that one Offence of his, in eating the forbidden Fruit; which yet these Sufferers could no Ways have possibly prevented, or have saved themselves from the Guilt of, for they, in their own Persons, neither did nor could give their Consent to the Terms of the Covenant made with their great Progenitor; nor could they hinder his sinning as he did, or any of the woful Consequences of his so doing; so that the whole would have been, as to them, unavoidable.

I suppose it will not be denied, that this must have been the Case of all *Adam's* Posterity, on the Supposition which I call in question. Now this is to many a very great Stumbling-block, or Matter of

Offence ; and tho' what is by *Calvinists* offered in Defence of it deserves serious Consideration, yet I am inclin'd to think, that the Imputation of *Adam's* first Offence to his Off-spring may be better defended on the Hypothesis which I have advanced, than on that which I am not well satisfied with : And therefore I have chosen that which I endeavour to defend ; and will essay a little more fully to clear it up.

I take it for granted, That the Covenant of Works was, in the Nature of it, a very gracious Covenant, a Covenant in which the Goodness of God was very greatly discovered ; and so a Covenant the Justice whereof might be vindicated against all Objections that might possibly be made against it, tho' God had insisted on the Terms of it, without abating one Jot or Tittle of its Demands, or admitting a Sponsor to make Satisfaction on Behalf of the Offenders against it ; and therefore that Course in which this may be best done, and the Honour of God's Justice and Goodness most clearly and easily vindicated, I think to be the most eligible, Care being still taken that this be not attempted in any Way inconsistent with any other divine Truth whatsoever. Now this I hope, the Way I have taken is suited to ; and that I may further shew that it is so, I will mention some of the happy Consequences following on what I plead for.

But before I do this, I think it needful to shew, what does not follow from it, at least that one Thing does not, which perhaps some may suspect does, I mean that it does not follow, on the Supposition for which I plead, That *Adam's* first and great Offence is not imputed to his Posterity. Could I think that such a Consequence would follow on it, I should not easily admit it.

Tho' it be maintain'd to be a Truth, that according to the Tenor of the Covenant which God made with *Adam*, *Gen. 2. 17.* his Off-spring (if he should have any) were to suffer Death, as well as himself and his Wife, in Case of his sinning in eating the forbidden Fruit ; yet this notwithstanding it might be a Truth, that, according to the Tenor of that Covenant, our first Parents were to be put to Death on that very Day in which they sinned, tho' that should fall out, as it did, while they had no Issue. It is certain by the Event, that our first Parents were liable to sin before they had any Children : And I think it also evident, that God did not any Ways oblige himself by his Word, to give them a Posterity, in Case they sinned before they had Issue : Nay, on the contrary, I think it evident from what has been

been said before, that they were to die on the very Day in which they should eat of the forbidden Tree. Now if this be granted, it will not follow from it that if a Way were found out to redeem these Offenders from present Death and Damnation, so that they might live and have an Off-spring in the World, that then the Children proceeding from them, after they were become guilty, and their Natures depraved by Sin, should not be involved in the same Sin and Death, which they themselves were involved in. This, I say, will by no Means follow, on the Supposition mentioned. If they proceed from *Adam*, in the Way of ordinary Generation, they must still, according to the Tenor of the Covenant made with him for himself and Off-spring, (if any he should have) be brought into the World in a State of Sin and Death, the Condition he was in after his Fall.

Having now shew'd what does not follow on the Hypothesis pleaded for, I shall proceed to shew what does follow from it.

And,

1. It plainly followeth from what I would have granted, That none had ever suffered any Pain or Torment, for Man's first and great Transgression, had the Threatning denounced in the Covenant of Works, been, in it's utmost Rigour, executed on the Breakers of it, but only those who personally sinn'd in eating the forbidden Fruit. This Consequence is most evident; because, if that Sentence of Death had been executed on *Adam* and *Eve*, according to the true Sense and Meaning of it, on the Day wherein they sinned, there could not have been any others to bear the Punishment with them, there being none to suffer besides themselves: For these sinning before they had any Issue, must needs, according to the Tenor of the Covenant they were under, have died without any Issue as before. I know God the great Law-giver, did not intend it should be thus; the Event shews the contrary: But this, for ought any thing I can yet see, was the meaning of the Threatning in the Covenant; so that the Transgressors of it, could justly expect no other, on their breaking of it; and I suppose they did not, tho' God found out a Way to spare them. It is therefore, I suppose, a Mistake, tho' many have fallen into it, That if there had been no Mediator provided, to undertake the Work of Man's Redemption, there would have been many Millions of People, besides *Adam* and *Eve*, who only personally transgressed the first Covenant, who must have suffered the Vengeance of eternal Fire, for their Sin, in eating the forbidden Fruit: They could have had no Posterity to have suffered, if no Mediator had been provided.

Therefore,

Therefore,

2. It plainly followeth, on the Hypothesis insisted on, That all the Posterity of the first *Adam* are obliged to our great Mediator for their very Being in the World. Had not a Mediator interposed, and obtained a Reprieve for our first Parents, they must have been put to Death on the very Day in which they sinned; and then none of their Off-spring could ever have had a Being. They might, and doubtless would, have had a numerous and happy Issue, had they not sinn'd; but by sinning against God while yet they were without any, they forfeited the Blessing of Posterity, yea forfeited their own Lives, and must have died Child-less, if the Son of God had not undertaken to be a Redeemer, born of a Woman, and made a Sacrifice for them; and then we, who are now their Off-spring, should never have seen the Light, but should have been, as it were, cut off before we had any personal Subsistence, tho' virtually we did exist in these Persons, in whom the whole humane Nature was then comprised: So that if they had been immediately cut off, we had virtually been cut off in them, as virtually we sinned in them, while personally we did not exist. It is therefore manifest, on the Supposition insisted on, that we are all beholden to Jesus Christ, as Mediator betwixt God and Man, for our very Being and Subsistence on the Earth. Had it not been for his Undertaking to be a Saviour, we should never have been.

3. It further followeth, on the Hypothesis here insisted on, That our first Parents, and all their Posterity, did, by Means of the Interposition of a Mediator to redeem and save them, immediately become Subjects of his mediatorial Kingdom. Mankind had, 'till then, been held fast under a Covenant of Works, to be dealt with according to the Tenor of that Covenant; but now the Son of God, (having been appointed a Mediator from Eternity) was promised to be a Saviour, in *Gen. 3. 15.* and so the Decree was declar'd, as in *Psal. 2. 7.* and his Undertaking this glorious Work reveal'd; and began to have its proper Efficacy, he being *the Lamb virtually slain from the Foundation of the World.* Not that Mankind were hereby immediately discharg'd from the Guilt of Sin, and entitled to eternal Life; for they remained still subject to the Penalty threaten'd in the broken Covenant of Works, 'till something might be farther done for them, pursuant to the mentioned Undertaking of the Redeemer. But what I intend, is, that they immediately became rightful Subjects of that Kingdom which the Son of God had, as Mediator, committed to him, and which he was afterwards to deliver up to his Father, as in *1 Cor. 15. 24.* It was by paying the Price of Man's Redemption, that our Lord obtained such

a Right to rule and govern all those, by his Laws and Ordinances, who are the Objects of his Purchase: And all the Laws given to Mankind since the Fall, are properly the Laws of the Mediator, by him given to them, the Price of whose Redemption he undertook to pay, and in due Time did so, according to his Covenant with his Father: And according to these Laws of his, he actually governs the World, blessing and rewarding the Obedient, and punishing the Disobedient, as is in the holy Scriptures abundantly declared. As for the Covenant of Works, that being once broken, Mankind stood in no other Relation to it than this, that they must undergo the Punishment threatned in it, unless in some Way consistent with the Tenor of it, they might obtain a Discharge therefrom. God never after the Fall of *Adam*, propos'd the Covenant of Works to sinful Men, as a Way in which they might obtain eternal Life; tho' he has sometimes given them a Representation of the Nature and Tenor of that Covenant, that he might convince them how impossible it is to obtain Happiness by Obedience to it, as in *Gal. 3. 10,--12.* Yet sincere Obedience to the moral Law is required in the new Covenant, and is, according to the Nature and Tenor of it, necessary to Man's Happiness: *Rev. 22. 14.*

4. It followeth, on the Hypothesis for which I plead, That all *Adam's* Off-spring are bro't into the World in a salvable Condition. In such a Condition, I mean, as that, in a Way consistent with divine Justice, and the Tenor of the first Covenant, they may be eternally saved. Nor do I intend this in such a Sense only, as wherein the same may be verified concerning sinful Mankind, before (if I may so speak) a Ransom was found for them, because it was in the Power of God to find out and provide a Way for their Salvation; which, if he could not have done, no Sinner could ever have been saved.

But I here intend to speak of a nearer Capacity of Salvation, on the Account of a Price already paid or promised to be paid, for their Redemption. For by the same Means that our great Mediator procured a Reprieve for fallen Mankind, that they might not, on their sinning against God, be immediately destroy'd, he also made Way for their eternal Salvation, *i. e.* by paying a full Price for their Redemption, a Price every Way sufficient to answer the Demands of the Law, and to satisfy God for the Injury done to him: And whereas the Price was not immediately paid down when Man first sinned and broke Covenant with God; the Security given for the Payment of this Price,

was

was such as the blessed God was as well satisfied with, as if the same had been immediately and actually paid. There was no Occasion to seek any farther for a Ransom or Atonement for the Sin of Mankind. Any Man might now be saved, without any other or further Price of Redemption; and there was now a Foundation laid for a Treaty of Peace betwixt God and sinful Men; and such Terms might now be propos'd to them, as they complying with, might be justified and saved, without doing any Injury to God's Justice, as the Apostle fully declareth in *Rom.* 3. 25, 26. Thus much Dr. *Twisse*, and many of our English Divines of great Note, and not suspected as inclined to *Arminianism*, have granted and maintained, as I can shew if Occasion call for it. And less than this cannot reasonably be allow'd to be intended in such Texts of Scripture, wherein the Extent of Christ's Death, with Relation to the Object of it, is asserted; as in *John* 3. 16. *1 John* 2. 2. *Heb.* 2. 9. *2 Cor.* 5. 14, 15. *Isai.* 53. 6. and *Isai.* 5. 18, 19.

5. It followeth from the Premises, That all *Adam's* Posterity are brought into the World in a far better Estate, than that of Not-Being. Tho' I agree not with them who think that a State of endless Torment is better than that of having no Being at all; yet I prefer a State of Salvability from a State of Sin and Death, which such as may be saved are at present supposed to be under, to that of Not-Being. Supposing I am not yet passed from Death to Life, and that I am not certain that I ever shall; yet since there is a Way found out, in which I may be saved, *i. e.* not only delivered from Sin and Death, but also obtain an exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory, I should be loth to change my present State for that of having no Being at all. And Persons capable of propagating their Kind, or of being Instruments of bringing Children into the World, may very reasonably desire to multiply their Kind, tho' they are persuaded that all that proceed from them, in the Way of ordinary Generation, will come into the World in a State of Guilt and Corruption; nor do I see that God does any Wrong, in bringing *Adam's* Posterity into the World, tho' they do and must come into it (if at all) in a State of Guilt and Pollution, as has been expressed, since it is better for them to be, tho' in such a Condition, than to have no Being: Which will yet more fully appear by the Sequel of this Essay. We may therefore, without any Inconvenience, allow unto *Arminians* that which some of them affirm, *viz.* That it will not stand with the Justice of God, to bring Mankind into the World in a worse State than that of Not-Being.

Being. I know of no Advantage that any of the Enemies of the Grace of God can make of such a Concession as this is.

But it may be here objected, That *to be a Sinner seems to be a worse Estate than that of having no Being. We had better have no Being at all, than to be in a State of Sin and Enmity against God, such as all Mankind are by Nature in, or as they come into the World, if the Doctrine of original Sin be a true Doctrine.*

I answer, That thus to say is to beg the great Thing in question. It seems that a wise and holy God has thought otherwise. If he, in his infinite Wisdom, had not seen it *better* that all Mankind should, by his Permission, fall into a State of Sin and Death than not, why has he permitted them to fall into that Estate? And if it had not been better for us to *exist*, tho' in a State of Sin and Misery, rather than *not* to come into *Being* at all, why did he give to fallen Adam a *Posterity*? when he might very consistently with the Covenant and with Justice have instantly cut him off before he had any Issue; and when, if Adam had an Off-spring, they must needs be involved with him in Sin and Misery.

But when I say, that such an Estate is to be preferred to that of Not-Being, I speak of what is best for Mankind, the Subjects here discours'd of. Nor do I here consider a State of Sin abstractly, without taking into the Consideration of Man's Estate, the Means and Advantages afforded unto Sinners, in order to their getting out of it, and getting into a Condition infinitely to be desired.

If it be here further objected, That *it seems not consistent with the Justice and Holiness of God, to punish Adam's Posterity with Sin, for that Sin which he committed;*

I answer, That if Adam's Sin be justly imputed to his Posterity, so that they justly bear the Punishment of it, which I now take for granted, I see no Reason why they may not be punished in this Way, as consistently with the Justice and Holiness of God, as if the Sin, for which they are supposed to be so punished, were committed by them in their own Persons; as in the Case of Adam and Eve themselves, and many others that might be named.

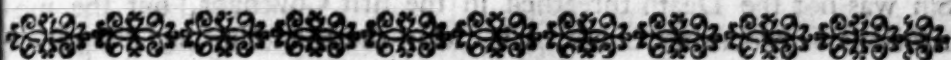
If it should be here said, That *the Sin of a publick Person, or moral Head and Representative, cannot be so imputed to the Persons represented by him, as to become their's, in the same strict Sense as it would be, if they in Person had committed it;*

I grant this to be true ; and as we must not say, That our Sins imputed to Christ, were his, by Means of that Imputation, in the same Sense in which they were our's, who committed them : So neither is *Adam's Sin* imputed to us, by that Imputation made our's, in the same Sense in which it was his,-----Yet that Sin and Fault of his was so our's, that we justly bear the Punishment of it, being for it liable to the same Death as he himself was.

If it should here be further said, That *Persons who have never actually sinned against God, (if any such adult Persons there might be) could not have the same Consciousness of Sin, as those, who in their own Persons, have actually sinned ; ---- so neither of that Guilt and Corruption which they are fallen under, without any personal Fault of their own ;*

To this I answer, That tho' this be allowed to be a Truth, since the Evils we bear, by means of the Sins or Faults of others who represent us, may befall us without our personal Consent given, in any Way whatsoever, to the Crimes committed by them, which seemeth to hold also in the Case under Consideration ; yet it may be here truly said, (1) That this Misery unto which we are subject by Means of *Adam's Sin*, has justly befallen us, on the Account of our own Sin, tho' our's only by Imputation, according to a just and holy Covenant, which God made with our moral Head and Representative. (2) Tho' Sin, by which the miserable State we are in has been bro't on us, was not committed by our own Persons ; yet was it committed by Persons subsisting in our Nature, and so is, in some Sort, the Sin of all Mankind, in the Way of ordinary Generation proceeding from *Adam*, their natural, as well as moral and political Head. And therefore, (3) We have no Reason to think or imagine, that had we, in our own Persons, been put on the same Trial as our common Head, in our Room and Stead, was, we should have done any better for our selves than he has done for us. (4) Tho' we cannot lament and bewail that as a Crime which we have committed in our own Persons, which we have not so committed ; yet we may lament the Sin committed in our Nature, by our moral Head and Representative. (5) We may also lament and bewail the sad Estate we are in, tho' by our own personal Fault we have not brought our selves into it. Tho' we brought not our selves into this Condition by any personal Offence of ours ; yet it is a very miserable Condition which we are justly plunged into ; and as such, may be justly bewailed by us ; and on the Account of which, we have Reason to loath our selves. See *Psal. 51. 5. and Ezek. 16. 2, 3, 4.*

It appears by what has been already said, that the Posterity of *Adam* come into the World under the Guilt of his first Transgression ; and with Natures depraved, by Reason of original Corruption convey'd to them in the Way of ordinary Generation ; and yet that their Condition is not worse than that of Not-Being, they being brought into the World by the Interposition of a Mediator, and so in a salvable State ; so that they have no Wrong done them, by their being bro't into the World in such a Condition as they are.



CHAP. II.

Concerning that Salvation which Sinners are supposed to have offered to them in the Gospel.

AVING in the foregoing Chapter consider'd the State of Sin and Misery, which Sinners are in, to whom the Offer of Salvation is supposed to be made in the Gospel ; we shall now the more easily conceive wherein that Salvation does consist, which these are supposed to have an Offer of ; to declare which is the Business of this Chapter.

And to this I say in general, That this Salvation does consist in Man's Deliverance from that Estate of Sin and Death, which I have already described, together with his Enjoyment of those good Things, of which they only are made Partakers, who are delivered from the forementioned Evils ; and who are made happy in the Enjoyment of God for ever. Man's Salvation does, indeed, most properly consist in his Deliverance from all those Evils, which his Sin and Apostacy from God has brought upon him ; but it does also, by a *Synecdoche*, contain and comprise in it all those good Things which they, and only they, have bestowed on them, who shall be crown'd with endless Happiness in the Kingdom of Glory. It is call'd *eternal Salvation*, Heb. 5. 9. and *Salvation with eternal Glory*, 2 Tim. 2. 10. and very frequently *eternal Life*, as in John 3. 15, 16.

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This Salvation compriseth or includeth in it several Things, some of the principal of which may be here briefly nam'd and considered.
As,

1. This Salvation compriseth in it, Man's Deliverance from the Guilt of all his Sins, and his being made righteous by the perfect Righteousness of Christ imputed to him. Indeed this seems not, in so strict and proper a Sense, to belong to Man's Salvation, as the other Things hereafter named. Strictly and properly speaking, a Man is rather by this entitled to Salvation, than actually saved. As Sin was not the Death threatned in the first Covenant, but the meritorious or procuring Cause of it, Man thereby losing or falling short of that perfect Righteousness, on which his Title to Life did depend; so when a Man is made perfectly righteous, by having the Righteousness of Christ imputed to him, this is not properly the Life it self promised to those that believe, but that by which they have a Right and Title to that Life; for of that none are ever made Partakers, without first having a perfect Righteousness, by which they come to have a Right and Title to it. Hence it was that *Paul* was so solicitous that he might be found in Christ, having on his Righteousness, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9. even the same Righteousness that is said to be *unto and upon them that believe*, *Rom.* 3. 22. and which is said to be *imputed without Works*, *Rom.* 4. 6. It may moreover be here observed, that the Imputation of Righteousness to us does not make any *real* Change in our Condition, but a *relative* Change only. As when a condemn'd Malefactor is pardon'd, so that the Law has nothing to lay to his Charge, this does not of it self set him free from his Prison and Chains, but only makes Way for it. He remains still in Hold, and bears the Burthen of his afflicted State, it may be, in a filthy Dungeon, 'till something farther be done for him, *i. e.* 'till he have a Goal-Delivery.

This notwithstanding, the Guilt of Sin being the Ground of all the Misery that follows on it, it may, on that Account, be looked on as a great Part of their Misery that lie under it, being that by which they are bound over to eternal Destruction, and excluded from eternal Happiness. Now on this Account, Men's Deliverance from the Guilt of Sin may be reckoned as belonging to that Salvation, which is in the Gospel offered to them; and therefore the Scriptures both of the old and new Testament, do abound with conditional Promises of Remission of Sin, in which a Promise of eternal Life and Salvation is always implied; because eternal Life always follows Forgiveness and Justification in God's Sight. See *Acts* 10. 43. *Psal.* 32. 1, 2. *Rom.* 4. 6, 7, 8. Christ's saving his People from their Sins, doubtless comprehendeth his delivering them from the Guilt of them.

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2. The Salvation offered in the Gospel compriseth also in it, Men's Deliverance from the Power and Dominion of Sin in them. And in Nothing that can be thought of, does the Salvation of Sinners more properly and eminently consist, than in this. All Men are, by Nature, Servants of Sin, wholly under the Dominion of it. Every *Imagination of the Thoughts of their Hearts being only evil continually*, Gen. 6. 5. Their Hearts are evil from their Youth. What Servants and Slaves of Sin, Men in their natural Estate, are, the Scriptures largely express, *Psal. 14. 1,---4. Psal. 36. 1,---4. Rom. 3. 9,---18.* and elsewhere, as we have seen, in Part, in the foregoing Chapter; as also how this comes to pass.

But now Men's Deliverance from this Servitude and Slavery must needs be one great Part of that Salvation, which Jesus Christ came to work for them, when he came into the World to *save his People from their Sins*, as in *Matth. 1. 21.* Of Men's Deliverance out of this Estate the Apostle treats largely, *Rom. Chap. 6.* especially from Verse 16 to the 22d, of which Discourse we have the Sum and Conclusion in the last Verse referred to, viz. *being now made free from Sin, and become Servants to God, ye have your Fruit unto Holiness, and in the End everlasting Life.* With which Words does well agree what we have in *Eph. 2. 1, 2. You hath he quickned, who were dead in Trespases and Sins.* Now, it is in the great Work of Regeneration that Men are thus saved from the Power and Dominion of Sin: Nothing short of this will effectually accomplish it. For this that Text is plain and full, *Tit. 3. 5. Not by Works of Righteousness which we have done, but according to his Mercy hath he saved us, by the Washing of Regeneration, and the Renewing of the Holy Ghost.* When Persons are said to be saved by the *Washing of Regeneration*, this means, that their Salvation does formally consist in this: Not that this is the Condition required; for that it is not, but one great Part of that Salvation which is conditionally offered to us, I shall hereafter shew. Indeed our Salvation does not more, or more properly, consist in any Thing, than in Regeneration; call'd in Scripture, our being *created anew in Christ Jesus unto good Works*, *Eph. 2. 10.* and our being *delivered from the Power of Darkness, and translated into the Kingdom of God's dear Son*, *Col. 1. 13.* also our being; *By Christ, redeemed from all Iniquity, and purified unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of Good Works*, *Tit. 2. 14.* This is indeed the Quickning of such as are dead, *dead in Sin and in the Uncircumcision of their Flesh*; as in these Texts of Scripture does appear, *Ezek. 37. 14. Eph. 2. 1. Col. 2. 13.* Thus all true Saints are *saved and called with a holy Calling*, &c. *1 Tim. 1. 9.* And herein God manifests the exceeding Greatness of his Power towards

wards them that believe, according to the Working of his mighty Power which wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead. When this is done for Sinners, they are therein saved.

3. The Salvation under Consideration compriseth in it, Men's Deliverance from the Power, Rule and Government of their spiritual Enemies. When Mankind first sinned against God, they cast off their Allegiance to their rightful Sovereign, and subjected themselves to the Government of the Devil, and became his Slaves and Vassals, who designing their utter and eternal Ruin, by his Enticements, prevail'd against them, *Gen. Chap. 3.* and took them captive at his Will, and still rules over all such as are not delivered out of his Snare. Now this Prince of Devils does, by his Legions of evil Angels, that attend on him, as the Prince of the Power of the Air, still work in the Children of Disobedience, tempting and over-coming all such as belong to the Kingdom of Darkness; and finally destroys all such as are not delivered out of his Hands.

Now in Men's Deliverance out of the Hands of this Enemy, (or rather, all these Enemies) does their Salvation very much consist. And this their Deliverance was most expressly foretold, yea ingaged, in that Promise given immediately after Man's Fall, *Gen. 3. 15.* That the Seed of the Woman should break the Serpent's Head: By his doing of which, the Seed of the Messiah were to be set at Liberty, when that glorious Promise should be fulfilled, in *Isai. 53. 10, 11, 12.* and *Isai. 49. 24, 25.* which Prophecies were accomplished by Jesus Christ, in the Days of his Flesh; and the Praise of God was, on that Account, celebrated at his Appearance in our Nature, by *Zecharias*, in his Song, *Luke Chap. 1. Verse 67, --- 74.* who being filled with the Holy Ghost, prophesied and said, *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his People, and hath raised up an Horn of Salvation for us, in the House of his Servant David; as he spake by the Mouth of his holy Prophets, which have been since the World began; that we should be saved from our Enemies, and from the Hand of all that hate us. To perform the Mercy promised to our Fathers, and to remember his holy Covenant: The Oath which he swore to our Father Abraham, that he will grant us, that we being delivered out of the Hands of all our Enemies, might serve him without Fear, &c.* The Price of this Redemption was paid by our Redeemer, when he pour'd out his Soul unto Death, and was number'd with the Transgressors, &c. as the Prophet *Isaiah* speaks, in *Isai. Chap. 53.* before quoted. And Sinners are actually freed from the Dominion of the Enemies of their Souls,

Souls, when being made Partakers of the Graces of God's Spirit, they are made strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might; enabled to wrestle with, and overcome, the Rulers of the Darkness of this World, as is expressed at large in *Eph. 6. 10.* and onwards to Verse 18.

4. The Salvation offered to Sinners in the Gospel, does also comprise in it, their Perseverance in true Faith and Holiness unto the End of their Lives. Perseverance in true Faith and Holiness, is not the Condition on which eternal Salvation is offered; as if our Salvation was suspended on our *Perseverance*: But on the contrary, it is contained and engaged in the Promise of Salvation made to every true Believer. Every true Believer, or regenerate Saint, has already *eternal Life*, and shall not come into *Condemnation*, but is passed from *Death to Life*, *Joh. 5. 24. Rom. 8. 1.* Such an one has already performed the Condition, on which Salvation is promised to him: Therefore his Perseverance unto the End belongs to his Salvation, and is secured to him in the Promise. --- And how should the same Thing belong both to the Salvation promised, and the Condition of the Promise? --- I hope in this, I shall meet with no Opposition from *Calvinists*: And with *Arminians* my direct Design is not to dispute. And I affirm, That there is no Text of Scripture, wherein eternal Salvation is conditionally promised, but what promiseth Perseverance to the End, without which Men neither are, nor can be, eternally saved. But besides this, there be many other more express Promises made to the Faithful, (at least plainly implied in the Texts intended) of Perseverance to the End. Among many such they who please may see *Jer. 31. 38, 39, 40. Isai. 40. 28, 31.* also *Chap. 41. 10, 13, 14.* and *Chap. 49. 14, 15, 16.* also *Chap. 54. 6, 7, 10. Psal. 125. 1, 2.*

5. The Salvation of sinful Men does, in Part, consist in their compleat Deliverance from Sin and all Temptations to Sin, in the Moment of their Death. Notwithstanding Men's Deliverance from the reigning Power of Sin and Satan, in their Regeneration and Preservation from the destructive Influences of these Enemies, in their Perseverance, they are not wholly freed from indwelling Sin, and Temptations to Sin during this Life. While they are here in a militant State, Sin and Satan are suffered to molest and annoy them, and sometimes, in particular Conflicts, to prevail against them, and put them to the worse. The Condition of God's Children, with Respect hereunto, is fully and clearly express'd by the Apostle, in *Rom. Chap. 7. Ver. 14.* and onwards to the End, and *Gal. 5. 17.* But at the Moment of

of the Death of the true Children of God, they are perfectly freed from any further Molestations from, or by these Enemies, being made then perfectly holy and removed out of their Reach. They are then taken from the *Evil* that is here, and enter into *Peace*, dying in the Lord, and resting in their Beds, each One walking in his Uprightness, *Isai.* 57. 1, 2. *They rest from their Labours, and their Works follow them,* *Rev.* 14. 13. their Spirits then being made perfect, in Respect of their Freedom from Sin. They are prepared for, and convey'd to, the Society and Communion of the Saints in Light, *Heb.* 12. 22, 23.

6. The Salvation offer'd in the Gospel comprehendeth in it, Man's Deliverance from his last Enemy, which is Death, *1 Cor.* 15. 26. Death is certainly an Enemy to Mankind. Humane Nature shrinks at it: It is called the *King of Terrors*, *Job* 18. 14. It is the *Wage of Sin*, *Rom.* 6. 23. *Gen.* 3. 19. tho' our Saviour hath taken away the Sting of Death, which is Sin, *1 Cor.* 15. 55, 56.

But at the Resurrection of the Just, this Enemy shall be removed, when the dead Bodies of God's Saints shall be raised, and this *Corruption shall put on Incorruption, and this Mortal shall put on Immortality*, as in *1 Cor.* 15. 54, 55. and when our vile Bodies shall be changed, and fashioned like to the glorious Body of Christ, *Phil.* 3. 21.

7. Man's Salvation, now under Consideration, does comprehend and include in it, his being put in Possession of that Glory and Happiness which the Saints shall enjoy in the heavenly World for ever, when the great Judge of the World shall say to the Sheep on his right Hand, as in *Matth.* 25. 34. *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World.*

It is to be feared that some, when they talk of Salvation, intend only this Part of it last mentioned, without duly considering the other foregoing, and with Respect to this, pre-requisite Parts of Man's Salvation, especially Man's Salvation from Sin. But what God has joined together, we should not separate in our Minds. The seven Things mentioned all belong to that Salvation which is offer'd in the Gospel. God gives none of them to any one to whom he gives them not all.

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CHAP. III.

Shewing what is imported in Salvation's being offered.

HAVING considered what is intended by that Salvation which, I say, is offered to Sinners in the Gospel; it is necessary that I now proceed to consider what is intended by an *Offer* of it.

Now to this I say, in general, That by Salvation's being offered unto Sinners, I intend its being conditionally promised to them. I take an *Offer* of a Thing, to be the same, in Effect, as a conditional Promise of it made to the Person unto whom it is said to be *offered*.

In an *Offer*, or *conditional Promise*, made to any Person, there is something propos'd to be done by him unto whom the *Offer* is made; and some Advantage, either explicitly or implicitly, promised to him on his doing what is *proposed*. I say, *proposed*, because the Thing may not be *required* of him as his Duty, but propos'd only as the Term or Condition, on which he may have the Advantage offered to him.

But, in the Offer of Salvation made to Sinners in the Gospel, the Thing propos'd to be done by sinful Men is proposed as a *Duty*, which they are under indispensable Obligations to perform; because the Thing is required by God of them; and therefore necessary, because they cannot be saved without it.

That which is required of sinful Men, in order to their Salvation, may, for ought I can yet see, be very fitly called the *Condition* on which Salvation is offered to them. I readily acknowledge, that there are several Sorts of *Conditions*, differing very considerably one from another; of which Differences I shall have Occasion hereafter to say something: For it is very necessary that we rightly understand what Kind of Condition *that* is, on which Salvation is said to be offered; but doubtless we may allow, that the Thing required may be called a *Condition*, and so I intend to call it in this Discourse; and I hope it will, in the Issue, appear, that no hurtful Consequences will attend its being so accounted and called.

In this which I call the *Condition* on which Salvation is offered, I comprehend and include every Thing that is required of Man, as indispensably necessary in order to his Salvation, so that God will not save him without his doing it; and unto his doing of which a Promise of Salvation is annex'd. To be sure, if there be any Thing which if a Man will not do God will not save him, that Thing must be understood as comprised in the Condition of Man's Salvation; and unto whomsoever a Promise of Salvation is made in God's holy Word, the Thing being to be done in order to our Salvation, that Thing is comprised in the Condition required. --- It matters not whether all so required be considered as one Condition, or as many, their Conditionality in this Affair being still affirmed: But if we speak of this as one Condition; as I usually do, then what is more particularly comprised therein, ought to be distinctly considered and declared, by what Name soever such Things are called, as *Faith, Repentance, Obedience, seeking the Lord, calling on him, coming to Christ, &c.* And it doubtless comprehends all these Things in it, as I shall hereafter shew, removing such Objections as are apt to be made against it.

And whereas all Mankind may be divided into two Sorts, or People of two different Conditions, *viz.* such as are in a regenerate and justified Estate, and such as are not, but in a State of Nature, under the Wrath and Curse of God; and so liable to eternal Damnation: it will certainly be necessary to consider which of these two Estates Sinners must be supposed to be in, when they perform the Condition, on which God offers to save them: And this seems to me to be an easy Question, but since many have, in this, a different Way of Thinking from me, this is to be particularly discussed in the second Part of this Essay, altho' it seems well nigh put out of Question, in the second Chapter of this.

That what is required of sinful Men in order to their Justification and Salvation, is well called by the Name of *Faith*, I very freely acknowledge; and that it is very frequently so called in Scripture is to me evident: But that it is also called by many other Names I shall shew, with the Reason of this Variety---. But whereas some mislike the calling of that *Faith*, by which we are in Scripture said to be justified, by the Name of a *Condition*; this may be here a little considered. Some object against this Word on the Account of the Ambiguity of it, there being *Conditions* of different Sorts or Kinds, some of which will not, as they think, agree to the Nature and Use of that Faith by which we are said to be justified. But this perhaps may as well

well be objected against the Word *Instrument*, used by some instead of it. And some think that this Word ascribes more to Faith, in the Affair of our Justification, than does indeed belong to it; or at least, that it does not well express the true Use and Influence of Faith, in the Justification of a Sinner before God. Some therefore express the Influence of Faith in this Affair by the Word *Instrument*, and sometimes call it an *instrumental Cause*. But the use of this Word or Expression is also tho't by *several*, to have its Inconveniences; with whom I also concur.

A learned and judicious Divine observing these Difficulties, as he conceives them to be, has thus express'd himself in this Matter. "I humbly conceive, saith he, we have been ready to look too far to find out what that Influence of Faith in our Justification is, or what is that Dependence of this Effect on Faith, signified by this Expression of being *justified by Faith*, over-looking that which is most obviously pointed forth in the Expression, *viz.* that the Case being as it is, (there being a Mediator that has purchased Justification) Faith in this Mediator is that which renders it a *meet* and *suitable Thing* in the Sight of God, that he rather than others should have this purchased Benefit assigned to him," *viz.* he that believeth in the Mediator. Now I willingly agree with this worthy Author, that *that* Faith by which the Ungodly are said to be justified, is the most *meet* and *suitable Thing* that could have been required of them to that End; and this was doubtless the Reason why God made choice of it to the Place and Office to which he assigned it, rather than any other Thing whatsoever; yet I think, with Submission to those of better Judgment, That this is no Ways inconsistent with its being called *the Condition* of Men's Justification: And it seems to me very evident, that its being so *meet* and *suitable* a Qualification, as is express'd, is not that by which a firm and sure Connexion is established betwixt a Sinner's believing and his being justified. The Reason why all that believe are infallibly justified and saved, is not because the Sinner that believeth in Christ is so *meetly* and *suitably* qualified to receive the Benefit of Justification; but this rather, that by the Promise of God there is infallible Assurance given, that whosoever believeth shall be justified and saved, as in *John* 3. 15, 16, *Mark* 16. 16. *Acts* 10. 43. Were it not for this, Sinners could not be sure that they should be saved on Supposition of their believing, were it possible, that they should believe, having no such Promise. So that after all, it is the *Conditionality* of Faith in the Covenant of Grace, that gives it the Advantage of being any Ways instrumental in our

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Justification.

Justification †. Thus it is by Faith, that thro' Grace the Promise may be sure to all the Seed, as in Rom. 4. 16. Heb. 6. 17, 18.

What that Faith is, unto which a Promise of Justification is annexed, is a Matter of great Importance, and ought diligently to be enquired into ; and I purpose, with God's Help, to consider this important Point, before I finish this Essay : But this is not what, in this Place, I design. At present I only say, it is the same that is required in the Texts of Scripture last quoted, and in other Places, shewing what Men must do to be saved, as in Acts 2. 37, 38. and 16. 30, 31. What is here incumbent on me, is, to state and clear up the true Notion of an *Offer* of Salvation made to Sinners in the Gospel ; and unto this End something further remains to be said.

1. Then, the Condition upon which Salvation is offered to Sinners is something required of *them*, that so they may be saved ; something to be done by them unto whom the Offer of Salvation is supposed to be made. The Condition required is not meerly this, that if such or such a Thing come to pass, then God will save us ; but if we comply with his Will in doing what is required of us, then God will bestow his Salvation on us. It is, I say, something to be done by us, not by God himself, or any one else besides our selves ; and this too something wherein we yield Obedience to the Call of God in the Gospel ; something contained in a proper Answer to this important Enquiry, " What shall I do to be saved ". The Difference betwixt the Covenant of Works, and that of Grace, lies not in this, that the Covenant of Works required our doing something that so we might live, but the Covenant of Grace nothing at all. What the Covenant of Grace requireth to this End, is sometimes called the *Obedience of Christ*, Rom. 16. 26. and *obeying the Gospel*. It is something wherein we perform our Duty to God as well as secure the Salvation of our own Souls.

2. The Condition, to this End required, is not only such, that we shall not be saved if we perform it not ; but that we shall be saved if we perform the Thing required. We are not only threatned with Death and Damnation, in Case we do it not ; but have a Promise of Life and Salvation, if we perform it. There are some Things which if those that enjoy the Gospel will not do, they shall be damned ; as to instance in two or three. If they will not hear or read the Word

† See *Willard of Justification*, on Phil. 3. 9.

of God, meditate on it, endeavour to understand it, nor at all Regard what is required of them in it; such, I say, as will not do these Things shall certainly be damned; but Persons may do such Things as these, and yet never be saved. God has not promised, that all that, after any Manner, do such Things, shall obtain eternal Life. But the Condition on which Salvation is offered, is such as whosoever complies with it shall certainly be saved.

3. The Condition on which Salvation is offered in the Gospel, must needs be such as may be, and is, performed by all that obtain eternal Life, *before* they do obtain it. Men cannot, in the Way of a Covenant, obtain a good Thing conditionally promised to them in it, 'till they have performed the Condition on which that Thing is promised. But when I say here, *before*, this must not be understood, as before, in Time, but in Respect of the Order of Nature, or according to the Reason or Dependence of Things one on another: For otherwise, as soon as the Condition required is by any Sinner performed, God without any Delay begins to save him; yea, puts him into a State of Salvation, see *John* 5. 24. But God will not so much as begin to bestow eternal Life on any Man, 'till he has performed the Condition on which the same is offered to him.

4. We ought here carefully to distinguish between an antecedent Condition, and such as is only concomitant. By an *antecedent* Condition, I understand such an one as is described in the last Head, i. e. one required in order to our having a good Thing conditionally promised: But by a *concomitant* Condition, I intend such a one as does inseparably accompany a good Thing conditionally promised, but is not, in order of Nature, before it. Thus, true Holiness inseparably accompanies the Justification of a Sinner, because God regenerates every one whom he justifies, and that in the very Moment in which he justifies him. But true Holiness is not an antecedent Condition of Man's Justification, not being required in order to it, tho' it be inseparably joined with it, and is a Qualification belonging to every justified Person. Hence, tho' God promises Salvation to all holy Persons, yet Holiness is not the Condition on which Salvation is promised; nor is any Act so, which floweth from a Principle of true Holiness, and so, belongeth to our Sanctification; as I shall hereafter shew.

5. We ought carefully to distinguish betwixt the Acts materially considered, in which the Condition of the new Covenant does consist, and the Rectitude of the same Acts, and the Manner in which they must

must be performed. In this Chapter I only consider what Acts are required: What is required in Order to their Rectitude will be consider'd in the second Part of this Essay; and what is required to their Continuance will be considered in the third.

6. Again, we must distinguish betwixt what is required in the Condition under Consideration, with Relation to the general and special Nature of it, *i. e.* in what Acts it consists, and how these must be performed; and what is required with Respect to the Prolongation or Continuance of what is required: For a Man may begin, and for a Time do what, as a Condition, is required of him, in order to his having a Benefit which is conditionally promised to him; and yet by his Failure fall short of the Good, which, in this Way, he is a Candidate for. Thus our first Parents either did or might have, for a Time, continued their Obedience to the Law of Works; and yet, for want of Continuance therein, they fell short of Life and Happiness, and so ruined themselves and all their Posterity.

And thus I will also shew, that the Case may be, with Respect to Persons that are in a State of Probation, in order to their obtaining the saving Benefits of the new Covenant: And yet, I am far from holding a Possibility of falling from Grace, in the Sense in which *Arminians* and others plead for it, *viz.* that regenerate and justified Persons may fall away, and finally perish. Yet it is true, that Persons may be engaged in such a Course that they should certainly be saved, did not their Apostacy prevent it, as I shall hereafter make evident from *Ezek. 18. 24. Matth. 24. 13* and other Places.

7. It is necessary that I here further observe, that the Condition of the Covenant required, in order to the Salvation of sinful Men, differs greatly from that which was required in the Covenant of Works, in order to Men's obtaining Life.

If I mention three remarkable Differences betwixt these it will be sufficient.

1. They differ in Respect of the Nature of the Thing required: For in the Covenant of Works, the Condition required was perfect Obedience, without any Failure, as to the Matter or Manner of its Performance, as appears *Gal. 3. 10*. But in the Covenant of Grace, the Condition required is Faith, Repentance, a seeking to God for Mercy, a coming to Christ for Life, &c. as will hereafter be more fully declared.

2. These Conditions differ greatly in Respect of the immediate End of their being required: For, according to the End of that required

quired in the Covenant of Works, it was to be the very Righteousness, in the Performance of which, Men were to stand righteous before God, and obtain a Title to eternal Life. But that required in the new Covenant is not, according to the Tenor of it, to be our justifying Righteousness, or that by which we should have a Right unto eternal Life, but is required of Sinners in order to their having an Interest in the perfect Righteousness of Another, for their Justification in God's Sight; even the Righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is unto and upon all them that believe, Rom. 3. 22. Such therefore as believe are in Scripture said to believe unto Righteousness, i. e. unto the obtaining of it; their Faith not being the Righteousness it self, that in which their justifying Righteousness does consist. Read and compare Rom. 10. 10. with Rom. 4. 5, and ver. 22. The Particle translated in, in the two Texts last referred to, being the same which is translated to, in Rom. 10. 10. Faith therefore, which is unto Righteousness, is only so far accepted of God, as that by it we obtain an Interest in the Righteousness of Christ.

3. And from the Differences already mentioned, it followeth thirdly, That the Condition required in the Covenant of Grace is, in a Sense, a gracious Condition, in which that required in the Covenant of Works was not. That required in the Covenant of Grace is such as may be performed by Sinners. That of the Covenant of Works was not so; but compatible only to the State of Mankind, while in Innocency. That of the Covenant of Grace is required that so we may become righteous; but that of the Covenant of Works was required that so Men might remain righteous, as they then actually were. In a Word, that now required is the Condition of a most gracious and merciful Covenant. That of the Covenant of Works was such as that Men, in the Performance of it, might obtain Life by their own perfect Obedience.

Thus it appears, that the Condition of the Covenant of Grace is of another Kind than that of the Covenant of Works. But it does not by any Means appear, that what is in the Covenant of Grace required of Men, in order to their Salvation, is no Condition at all; nor ought that to be granted.

CHAP. IV.

Shewing, That there is an Offer or conditional Promise of Salvation made to Sinners in the Gospel.

HAVING hitherto endeavoured to explain the Proposition under Consideration; I come now, in the fourth and last Place, to say something for the Confirmation of the Truth asserted, viz. that it is indeed a Truth, that God does offer Salvation to sinful Men in the Gospel; or that he does conditionally promise to bestow eternal Life on them.

But before I enter on the Proof of this most comfortable Assertion, it is very necessary that one Thing, very evidently supposed and implied in it, be a little explained and cleared up, without the doing of which the main Assertion here maintained cannot be very advantageously and clearly supported.

Now that which I here intend is this, That Mankind have, since their Fall into a State of Sin and Death, had so much done for them, in order to their Recovery out of that miserable Estate, as thereby to be put into a State of Salvability: For otherwise there would be no Room for an Offer of Salvation to be made to them. Now Mankind, since their Apostacy, may be conceived to be in a salvable Condition in two Respects, or on a two-fold Account. (1) In Respect of the Sufficiency of God to find out and provide a Way for their Salvation, whatever seeming Difficulties, in Respect of the Threatning denounced against Sinners, and of his own Truth and Justice, seemed to lie against it; yet this notwithstanding, I say, the Wisdom, Goodness, and Power of God was such, that it was, in that Respect, possible for him to find out and provide a Way, in which such Sinners as Mankind were, might be eternally saved. But this is not what I principally here intend. Wherefore, (2) Mankind may be said to be in a salvable State, in Respect of a Price already paid, or undertaken to be paid, for their Redemption. I say, either paid or undertaken to be paid, because this was the same Thing in Respect

of

of the Efficacy of the Atonement I intend. It was as available, in Respect of all the saving Ends of it, before it was actually paid, as it was afterwards ; and on this Account our Saviour is call'd *the Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World*. It is in Respect of this Price of Redemption, that I here affirm Mankind to be in a salvable Estate. They are so now, in Respect of a Price already paid for them, in order to their eternal Happiness. And this I suppose to be a Truth, with Respect to all Mankind without Exception : So that tho' there are many who never will be saved, yet the Reason of this is not, because there is not a sufficient Price paid for their Redemption, nor because this is not a Remedy applicable to them, according to the Tenor of the new Covenant, but for other Reasons hereafter to be mentioned.

This State of Salvability, which Mankind are by me supposed to be in, has its Rise and Foundation, as I have said, in the Price of Redemption paid for them, by their great Saviour ; and that this was of sufficient Value to save the whole World I here take for granted. That it was a Price laid down for all, without Exception ; and, according to the Tenor of the new Covenant, applicable to any one, and to every one of the sinful Children of Men, I suppose to be a Truth clearly revealed in the Word of God ; and that the Reason why it is not so generally believed so to be, is not because it is not sufficiently asserted in Scripture, but because many have, without sufficient Grounds, supposed that a Belief of this cannot be reconciled to some other Articles of Faith, which they think clearly and fully revealed : But this I shall have Occasion hereafter to consider.

At present I will shew, what is in Scripture affirmed, with Respect to the Extent of Christ's Death, with Relation to the End and Object of it. And here, not to insist on what is said about his mediatorial Righteousness, in *Rom. Chap. 5.* betwixt the 12th and the 19th Verses, where his Righteousness is opposed to the Sin of the first Adam, as a sufficient Remedy against the Mischiefs and Miseries brought on Mankind by it ; I shall only recite some of those Passages of Scripture, wherein the Universality of Christ's Death, as it respects the Persons for whom he died, seems to be plainly and fully asserted. Thus we are told, that *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life*, John 3. 16. That *he is the Propitiation for our Sins : And not for our's only, but for the Sins of the whole World*, 1 John 2. 2. That *he tasted Death for every Man*, Heb. 2. 9. That *he gave himself*

a Ransom for all, 1 Tim. 2. 6. That he died for all, 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15. And that he is the Saviour of all Men, especially of those that believe, 1 Tim. 4. 10.

That the most obvious Sense of these Texts of Scripture, is, That Jesus Christ died for all Men without Exception, I think very evident. Nor is it at our Liberty to recede from this, without some urgent Necessity compelling us to it, which I suppose can never be shown; but instead thereof, I will shew a Necessity of taking of them in the full Latitude in which they are express'd. I do not therefore wonder, that there have been a great many eminent Divines, in the English Nation, who have been far from being *Arminians*, that have plainly and fully asserted Christ's dying for all, as I could easily manifest, did I rely on humane Authorities, as I do not.

Yet I shall mention one Instance of this, not so much on the Account of the Authority of the Man (tho' I know of no Man whose Authority would go farther in this Case) as because I think he fairly states wherein the Difference lies betwixt himself and some others, and particularly betwixt what he held and I now hold, and consequently wherein the Crisis of this Controversy does, in my Apprehension, lie.

The Person I intend is the learned Dr. Twisse: And the Book from which I shall take some Passages, is entitled, *The Riches of God's Love to the Vessels of Mercy*, &c. Part. I. Page 5. "We are often demanded, saith he, whether every one that heareth the Gospel be not bound to believe that Christ died for him? Now I say this Phrase, *Christ died for me*, includes many Things; as the Benefits which arise unto me by the Death of Christ, may be conceived to be many. But let these Benefits be distinguished, and we shall readily answer to the Question made, and that perhaps differently, as namely, affirmatively to some, negatively to others; as thus, Do you speak of Christ's dying for me, that is, for the Pardon of my Sins, and for the Salvation of my Soul, I answer affirmatively and say, I am bound to believe that Christ died for the procuring of these Benefits unto me, in such Manner as God hath ordained; to wit, not absolutely but conditionally, to wit, in Case I do believe and repent. For God hath not otherwise ordained, that I should reap the Benefits of Pardon and Salvation, by virtue of Christ's Death and Passion, unless I believe in him and repent."

In

In another Place, this learned Author asserting the Death of Christ in the same Latitude and Extent, saith, (Page 154) "To die for us, or for all, is to die for our Benefit, or for the Benefit of all: Now these Benefits are of a different Nature, whereof some are bestowed upon Man only conditionally (tho' for Christ's Sake) and they are the Pardon of Sin and the Salvation of the Soul, and these God doth confer only upon the Condition of Faith and Repentance. Now I am ready to profess and that, I suppose, as out of the Mouth of all our Divines, That every one who hears the Gospel, (without Distinction between Elect and Reprobate) is bound to believe that Christ died for him, so far as to procure both the Pardon of his Sins and the Salvation of his Soul, in Case he believes and repents." In another Place he saith, That as Peter could not have been saved, unless he had believed and repented; so Judas might have been saved, if he had done so. And the Doctor referring to that Text, *John* 3. 16. saith on it, That "it gives a fair Light of Exposition to those Places, where Christ is said to have died for the Sins of the World, yea, of the whole World, to wit, in this Manner, That whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life."

Thus far I have Dr. *Twisse* fully with me in what I assert, viz. That Christ died for all Men, so far forth as to purchase Life and Salvation for them, in Case they believe in him, and repent of their Sins. He did this for the whole World, and not for the Elect only: So there is no Man but what may be saved on the Terms of the new Covenant, even *Judas* was not excepted or excluded.

But here I must add a Word, lest this should be misunderstood. The Meaning of this Assertion is not, that it is a Truth, that Jesus Christ died for all Men, if it shall eventually come to pass that all Men believe in him, but that otherwise this Assertion is false. It is even now a Truth, that Christ died for all Men, or otherwise that he did not die for all Men. This cannot be made either true or false, by Men's future Carriages. The Meaning therefore of the Assertion maintained, is, that Jesus Christ has really so died for all Men, as to purchase this Advantage for them, that they shall be saved, if they will believe and repent.

It is not supposed in what is here maintained, that Jesus Christ died equally, or in the same Sense, for all Mankind, Elect and Non-Elect. The Difference here is wide, and may, I think, be best conceived of, by a due Consideration of the Relation of Christ's Death to the two Covenants, to which it has a Reference: I mean that of Redemption

betwixt the glorious Persons of the holy Trinity, and that of Grace (as it is commonly called) which God has been pleased to propose to Mankind since the Fall.

If we consider the Death of Christ, with Relation to the Covenant of Redemption, or Terms agreed on betwixt the Son of God on the one Part, (as I conceive) and the Father and the holy Spirit, on the other, tho' the Father be more expressly mentioned in Scripture, as concerned in this Covenant, than the holy Spirit: If, I say, we consider the Death of Christ, with Relation to this Covenant, the Son of God did, by his Death and mediatorial Righteousness, obtain for the Elect of God, or all those whom in Scripture the Father is said to have given him, a perfect and compleat Salvation in all the Parts and Branches of it, the principal of which are enumerated in *Rom.* 8. 29. viz. *Effectual Calling, Justification and Glorification*: For in the Covenant here intended, Sinners themselves are not a Party; and therefore the Conditions to be performed lie not on them, but on the Mediator, who undertook for them, and fulfilled the Terms required of him, in order to the Salvation of those who were ordained to Life. None of these, therefore, ever miscarry, as might be plainly shewed from Scripture, were it my present Business. Such as please may read and compare *Isai.* 53. 10, 11, 12. *John* 6. 38, 39, 40. *Rom.* 9. 29. *Acts* 23. 48. *John* 7. 37. and Chap. 10. 27, 28, 29. Hence the Acts of Christ's Mediation are spoken of, as having a peculiar Reference to these, in many Places of Scripture, as in *John* 17. ver. 6, 8, and 19, 20. and Chap. 10. 15. But such Places are not to be understood as if Christ died for the Elect only; for besides his absolutely mentioning the Salvation of all these, he was, according to the Covenant of Redemption which he entered into, to bring the Rest into a State of Salvability, that so God might be just in justifying any of them on the Terms of another Covenant, (that of Grace I intend) which was to be proposed to Sinners themselves, as plainly appears, in *Rom.* 3. 25, 26. with which that well agreeth, *Heb.* 9. 22. And upon Christ's doing this are grounded all the Offers of special Mercy made to Sinners in the Covenant of Grace, such as are implied in *John* 3. 16. *Acts* 10. 43. *Mark* 16. 15, 16. and *Acts* 16. 30, 31. And tho' Christ has by his Obedience and Death, purchased the Whole of the Salvation of all the Elect, so that the same is justly due to him; yet they cannot come to the Enjoyment of this Salvation, 'till they come up to the Terms of the Gospel, wherein it is conditionally offered to them. How God deals with those unto whom Gospel Terms are not offered, I am not here considering: But this I will venture to say, that I conceive them to be in a salvable State,

State, so that if they are not saved, it is not because Justice will not allow of it. And I doubt not but that Jesus Christ was to bring the whole World into such a State as this, and not the Elect only.

And now let us consider the Death of Christ, as it has a Relation to the Covenant of Grace, proposed to Sinners themselves. Now as Christ's Death relates to this Covenant, no Man can plead a Right to the Benefits procured by it, 'till he believes in him that died for him; nor can he be put in Possession of the special Benefits offered in this Covenant, except he performs the Conditions of it. In this Respect *Peter* and *Judas*, Elect and Non-Elect, are on a Level. He that believeth shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned. As the mediatorial Righteousness of Christ is sufficient for the Salvation of the whole World, so it is, according to the Tenor of the new Covenant, a Remedy applicable to any Person, on the Terms therein proposed; so that it is not contrary to the Justice of God, effectually to call, justify, and glorify any Person whatsoever. If this is not done for all, it is not because there is not a sufficient Remedy provided, but for such other Reasons as are given in God's Word.

But now let us consider the Doctor's Antithesis, in the Place above quoted, Page 5. "If, saith he, the Question be made, Whether I am bound to believe that Christ died for me, to procure Faith and Repentance for me, I do not say, that I am bound, or that every Man is bound to believe this." And a little below he saith, "I see a Reason manifesting that Christ merited not this for all, no not for all, and every one that hears the Gospel. For if he had, then he had merited it for them absolutely, or conditionally, not absolutely, for then all, and every one should believe *de facto*, which is untrue; for the Apostle saith, (2 Thes. 3.) *Fides non est omnium*; nor conditionally, for what Condition, I pray, can be devised, upon the Performance whereof, God, for Christ's Sake, should give us Faith and Repentance." To this Demand I shall hereafter answer.

Thus, according to Dr. *Twisse*, tho' the Pardon of Men's Sins and the Salvation of their Souls were conditionally purchased for them by Jesus Christ, viz. on the Condition of Faith and Repentance, and this for all, without Exception; yet these Conditions were, by Jesus Christ, purchased only for the Elect, and are not offered unto Sinners, on any Condition whatsoever.

The latter Part of what he held I shall hereafter consider. That Christ died to obtain Salvation for all Men, on the Terms of the new Covenant, I now take for granted, at least suppose it to be a Truth:
And

And all those for whom Christ thus died, I hold to be in a salvable Estate; otherwise, how are they beholden to Christ for thus dying for them?

And I would fain be plainly shewed how the Gospel can be preached to any Sinner for whom Christ thus died not? Or on what Foundation any Sinner can have Salvation offered to him, for whom it hath never been so much as conditionally obtained by Jesus Christ, in the Sense allowed by Dr. Twisse, as above? May a Sinner be saved without having any Price of Redemption paid for him, in Case he believes? Or does this still remain to be done for him, if he should believe in Christ? Or may Salvation be fitly offered to him for whom Christ died not, on Condition of his believing, tho' it could not be given to him should he believe? Seeing God knows that it is not in his Power to believe, having no Object set before him, on which his Faith may be fixed, or any Eye to look to him, if there were, as is required in *Isai. 45. 22.* I may very seriously say, I know of no Kindness that can be shown in such an Offer, i. e. an Offer of Salvation made to Sinners that are not in a salvable State.

But Christ having died for all Men, to purchase Salvation for them, on the Terms expressed in a most gracious Covenant, *well ordered in all Things and sure*, there is then a Foundation laid for a Treaty of Peace and Reconciliation with sinful Men, on the Account of a Price of Redemption paid by Jesus Christ, as in *Rom. 3. 24, 25, 26.* where the Apostle having affirmed, that *all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God*, he adds, that *we are justified freely by his Grace, thro' the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ: Whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation thro' Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness for the Remission of Sins that are past, thro' the Forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this Time, his Righteousness, that God might be just and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.* In which Words we are assured, That it would not have stood with the Justice of God to have justified a Sinner, tho' a Believer, had not Christ been set forth, as in the Words expressed. And it will no more consist with the Justice of God to offer Salvation to a Sinner for whom Christ died not, than actually to save him without Christ's dying for him. And Salvation might have been as well offered to the whole World, if Christ had not died at all, as to any one Sinner for whom he died not.

How

How there has been a Foundation laid for the Salvation of sinful Men, or Way made for it, so that it may be done without any Injury to the Justice of God, or any other of his Attributes, yez, with great Honour to them all, has been now sufficiently declared. And the Reason why the Gospel is not preached, and Salvation offered to all Mankind, is not because all are not in a salvable State, or because there is not a Foundation laid in the Mediation of Christ for the Salvation of any Person or People in the World: So that there is no Sinner that has not committed the unpardonable Sin, who may not be invited to believe in the Son of God, and promised, that so doing, he shall be saved.

But before I prove, that Salvation is offered to Sinners in the Gospel, there are three Things necessary to be observed to clear up my Way to what is designed, and they are these here following.

1. The Promises of Salvation made in the Word of God, to such as are already in a regenerate and justified State, are nor conditional, but absolute. God does not in his Word say to any regenerate and justified Person, that if he shall or will believe and repent, he shall be justified and saved. There is no Reason or Occasion for God so to say to those who have already believed and are passed from Death to Life, and so are secured from ever coming into Condemnation, as in *John* 5. 24. *Rom.* 8. 1. But they are poor unregenerate, unjustified Sinners that have, in the Gospel, a conditional Offer of Salvation made to them. These are there told, that tho' they are at present in a State of Sin and Death, yet if they will believe in the Son of God, they shall have Life through his Name, as in *John* 20. 31. but that otherwise, they shall die in their Sins, *John* 8. 24.

Indeed there is another Sense, in which it may be, and is, in Scripture, said to Persons already in a State of Salvation, it being yet unknown to themselves and others that they are so, viz. "supposing ye are now true Believers, and in a regenerate State, ye shall be certainly saved for ever: As ye be already in a State of Salvation, so God will certainly save you for the future, perfecting in you all that does concern you." *He that has begun a good Work in you will perfect it to the Day of Christ*, as in *Phil.* 1. 6. *1 Pet.* 1. 3, 4, 5. Hereto agreeth that of our Saviour, *John* 11. 26. (as well as *John* 5. 24. before mentioned) *He that liveth and believeth in me shall never die.* The Faith intended in such Places of Scripture as these, is not a Condition on which Salvation is offered, which they already have, but the Qualification by which Persons may be known to be in a justified State; and this Kind of Faith is infused in our Regeneration,

ration, as shall be hereafter shown. Of this Kind of Faith that Text is to be understood, *John* 5. 24. The same Kind of Faith is also intended, *1 John* 1. 1.

2. I must here also observe, That whenever any spiritual Benefit or good Thing is conditionally promised in Scripture, which is never bestowed on any but such as are eternally saved, under the Name of that good Thing, the whole of Man's Salvation is always comprehended or comprised. Salvation is a complex Subject including several Things in it, all which are firmly connected or knit together, so as never to be separated in any Person that is saved. As those who are not saved have none of them, so those that are saved have them all: Therefore all of them are spoken of as *Things accompanying Salvation*, *Heb.* 6. 9. Hence it comes to pass, that if but one or two of these Things are mentioned, in any Promise of God, they are all necessarily intended and comprised under the Name of that Thing, or those Things that are expressly named, as much as if they were all enumerated. There is no Occasion of particularly naming of them all, because they forever all go together, and he that shall have one of them shall as certainly have all the rest. We are not therefore to think, that Salvation is conditionally promised in the Texts only wherein it is particularly named: A Promise of Pardon of Sin, of Justification, of the holy Spirit, of spiritual Wisdom, respectively, is as truly a Promise of Salvation, as that, *Whosoever believeth shall be saved*. So when *Salvation* is in that *Word* promised, all Things which that *Term* comprehends, as above, are therein promised.

3. I must here further observe, That on whatsoever Condition any spiritual Benefit comprised in Man's Salvation, is promised, under that Term or Condition, the whole Condition of Man's Salvation, or every Thing required as a Condition of it, is necessarily comprised or implied. The Reason of this is very plain. If a Person be required to do one Thing, unto which several others are inseparably connected, in Respect of the Nature of them, and their Relation and Dependance one on another, all those Things must needs be virtually required under the Name of that one. Hence whenever God, in Scripture, requires either Faith, Repentance, Obedience, Prayer, or Fear, &c. he requires every one of these. A Man cannot do any one of these Things without doing them all; therefore God, in requiring any one of them, does virtually require them all; and if he annex a Promise to the Performance of this, that, or the other of them, that Promise has a Relation to them all, and they are all virtually or implicitly comprised in the Condition

Condition of it. Thus if Salvation be conditionally promised to Believing, it is therein conditionally promised to Repentance also; because these Things are inseparable in the Nature of them, so that one of them cannot be without the other; and the like may be said concerning calling on God, seeking his Face, fearing his Name, &c. We therefore find in Scripture, that Promises of spiritual Blessings, or, in a Word, of Salvation, in which all such Blessings are comprehended, are made promiscuously to such Actions or Duties as I have just now named; but by no Means to any of them exclusively of the rest, but to this or that in which all the rest are implied, as being inseparable from it.

And it is the more necessary thus to conceive, because the Things by God required of Man, are of such a mixt Nature, and (if I may so speak) so blended together, that they cannot be fully described or conceived of, without taking into the Idea of them, respectively, something belonging to the rest. As to instance, we have a Promise that he that believeth shall be saved, *Mark* 16. 16. But how can we conceive of this Faith or Believing, as wholly excluding Repentance, Obedience, and Prayer, &c. from the Idea of it? And how can we define Repentance, without comprising Faith, Obedience and Prayer in it? Is not Faith exercised in Repentance and Prayer? And does not Faith give Life and Vigour to it? *We cannot call on him, on whom we do not believe*, *Rom.* 10. 14. Nor is that worthy the Name of Prayer that has no Faith in it, or is not a Prayer of Faith, *Jam.* 5. 15. And of Repentance the same may be said. All our Duties must be mixed with Faith, or they will be unacceptable to God, *Heb.* 4. 2. and 11. 6. If we go about nicely to distinguish these Things, we neither edify our selves nor others; nay, we do thereby but perplex the true Servants of God. When we speak of Believers, Penitents, such as call on the Name of the Lord, the Righteous, &c. the same Persons are, by these Terms, intended. And it is so also when the Holy Ghost speaks of such.

These Things being observed, and duly considered, I need not say much to prove, That Salvation is offered or conditionally promised unto Sinners in the Gospel. The most that now remains needful to this End, is, to quote and recite some of the many Texts of Scripture, wherein it is obvious that they have in the Gospel such Offers of Salvation made to them; and in what Things the Condition of the new Covenant does consist.

Of the Texts I here intend, some only need to be inserted; the rest I shall only refer to, that such as please may read them. Those which

which I shall recite are these which here follow, viz. Mark 16. 15, 16. Go ye into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. Acts 2. 37, 38. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their Heart, and said unto Peter, and to the Rest of the Apostles, Men and Brethren, What shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the Remission of Sins, and ye shall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost. Heb. 5. 9. And being made perfect, he became the Author of eternal Salvation to all them that obey him. Rev. 22. 14. Blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have Right to the Tree of Life, and enter in thro' the Gates into the City. Rom. 10. 13. Whosoever shall call on the Name of the Lord shall be saved. Amos 5. 4. Thus saith the Lord unto the House of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live. Prov. 8. 17. They that seek me early shall find me. Matth. 7. 7, 8. Luke 11. 9, 10. Ask, and it shall be given you, seek, and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth, and he that seeketh, findeth, and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened. Luke 11. 13. If ye then, being evil, know how to give good Gifts to your Children: How much more shall your heavenly Father give his holy Spirit to them that ask him. Prov. 1. 23. Turn ye at my Reproof: Behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my Words unto you. Prov. 2. 3, 4, 5. If thou criest after Knowledge, and liftest up thy Voice for Understanding; if thou seekest her as Silver, and searchest for her as for hid Treasures, then shalt thou understand the Fear of the Lord, and find the Knowledge of God. Hos. 6. 3. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: His going forth is prepared as the Morning, and he shall come upon us as the Rain; as the latter and former Rain upon the Earth. Gal. 6. 9. And let us not be weary in well doing: For in due Season we shall reap, if we faint not.

Texts of Scripture like these that have been now mentioned are these which here follow. Acts 10. 43. Rom. 10. 9, 10. John 20. 31. Acts 6. 30, 31. John 8. 24. Acts 3. 19. Luke 13. 3. Isai. 55. 7. Ezek. 18. 27, 28, and ver. 30. Prov. 28. 13. James 4. 8. Rom. 2. 7, and ver. 10, Acts 10. 34, 35. Prov. 8. 17. Isai. 45. 19. 2 Chron. 28. 19. John 4. 10. compar'd with ver. 14. and Chap. 7. 37, 38, 39. Jer. 29. 13. Psal. 103. 17, 18. Matth. 11. 28. John 6. 37.

I shall, unto the Scripture Testimonies, add two Reasons to prove That Salvation is conditionally offered unto Sinners in the Gospel

and

and so I shall conclude this Chapter, and this first Part of my Essay. Now my Reasons are these.

1. If God does not offer, or conditionally promise Salvation unto Sinners in the Gospel of his Son, then he does not save them in the Way of a Covenant, which, I think, according to Scripture, he evidently does; and also according to the Judgment of the Generality of orthodox Divines. That Sinners are saved in the Way of a Covenant, I think, the Word of God does plainly enough hold forth. This in Scripture is call'd the *new Covenant*; and generally, by Protestants, the *Covenant of Grace*: Of it we read frequently in the Oracles of God; unto some of which Places I shall content my self here to refer my Reader, partly because it would take much Time to transcribe them; and partly because I hope there are not many who question what I assert. This was the Covenant made with *Abraham* and his Seed, *Gen. 17. 7.* And that in which *David* professeth, is *all his Salvation* and *all his Desire*, *2 Sam. 23. 5.* It is a Covenant made with Sinners in a wretched State of Sin and Misery, *Ezek. 16. 8.* A better Covenant than the old Covenant was; and a Covenant in which spiritual Blessings are given, *Jer. 31. 33. Heb. 8. 10,---13.* and in which everlasting Mercies are conditionally promised to the Keepers of it, *Psal. 103. 17, 18. Psal. 25. 10. and Act. 2. 38, 39.* How then can it be denied, That Salvation is conditionally promised in the Gospel? I expect, that if I meet with Opposition in this Particular, I shall have many that will stand in my Defence; and I am sure I can produce a great Number to vouch for me, among Divines who have been in good Credit in the Church of God; tho' I know *Antinomians* deny what I here maintain.

2. If Salvation be not promised conditionally unto Sinners, then they have no Ground of Assurance, that on the Performance of the Duties which God requireth of them, in order to their Salvation, they shall certainly be saved. I suppose it neither can, nor will be denied, that God requires some Things of sinful Men, to be done by them, with an Eye and View to their eternal Salvation: But is it likely to be true, or comfortable to be believed, that God has not promised us eternal Life, in Case we do what is required of us, in order to our obtaining it? We are not yet come to consider, how far it is in the Power of sinful Men to perform what is incumbent on them in order to their Salvation. That will be the Business of the second Part of my Book. But the Question here is, Whether God does not, in

Gospel, conditionally offer to save Sinners ? And I say, if he does not, then Sinners have no Assurance given them of it, whatever they do, in order to their obtaining eternal Life : And if so, I confess they have not so good Encouragement to endeavour to comply with their Duty, as I have ever tho't they had, and, as I think, that Text much favours their having, Rom. 4. 16. *Therefore it is of Faith, that it might be by Grace ; to the End the Promise might be sure to all the Seed, not to that only which is of the Law, but to that also which is of the Faith of Abraham, who is the Father of us all.*



PART

PART II.

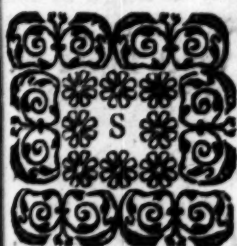
I come now to the second Part of my Essay ;
and that which I principally designed in it,
Namely,

*That the Offer of Salvation made to Sinners
in the Gospel, compriseth in it an Offer of
the Grace given in Regeneration.*

Now I shall endeavour the Explanation and
Confirmation of this Truth, in several
Chapters hereafter following.

CHAP. I.

*Concerning the Grace of Regeneration, here
said to be conditionally offered unto Sinners.*



SINCE I suppose the Grace of Regeneration to
be comprised in that Salvation, which is offered to
Sinners in the Gospel ; it will be necessary for me
to shew what I mean by that which I so call :
And I suppose that by a just Account of it, it will
appear to be a very eminent Part of that great Sal-
vation which Christ has purchased, and which God
bestows on all those whom he eternally saves.

Now I shall not here attempt to give a full Account of the great
Work of Regeneration, but only to observe and assert some Things
concerning

concerning it, the Observation of which will, I think, be to my present Purpose; and they are such as here follow.

1. In Regeneration there is a real Change wrought in the Soul of a Sinner. (1) That in Regeneration there is a Change wrought, I suppose will not be denied. (2) This Change is a *real* Change. I so call it in this Place, not in Opposition to the mere Shew and Appearance of one, but to distinguish it from a Change *relative*. In the Justification of a Sinner, he passeth under a relative Change, viz. a Change from a State of Guilt, to a State of Peace and Favour with God: But in Regeneration, a Sinner has a real Change wrought in and upon his Person: He is made in himself really better than he was before. (3) The immediate Subject of this Change is the Soul of the Sinner, in whom it is wrought; tho' the same does also affect his Body, yet I think the immediate Subject of it is the Soul. In it he has a new Heart given to him, *Ezek. 36. 26.*

2. The Change intended respects the Sinner's moral State and Condition. It is not a Change in the Essence of his Soul, and Faculties of it; but it respects its moral Qualities. The Soul of the Man is essentially the same in every Condition. He has not really another Soul given to him, when he is regenerated; but his Soul is made, in a moral Sense, better than it was; being made holy, whereas it was utterly destitute of any true Holiness; (in a strict and proper Sense so called,) and very full of Sin.

3. In the Change intended, Sinners are delivered from the reigning Power and Dominion of Sin. Tho' they may still have, yea, they really have, a great deal of Sin and Corruption remaining in them, as the Apostle shews at large in *Rom. Chap. 7.* and more briefly in *Gal. 5. 17.* yet they are no longer under the reigning Power and Dominion of their Corruptions, as the same Apostle asserts at large in the 6th Chapter of *Romans*, as any one may see, that will please to read it; especially Verses 2, 6, 7, 14, 18, and 22. which I need not transcribe.

4. There is in the Change which I speak of, a Principle of spiritual Life and Holiness infused into, or implanted in, the Soul. As Sin is mortified in it, so it is quickned and made capable of serving God in Newness of Life. Indeed it is by that Change which is wrought in it that both these are effected.

But

But here I shall more particularly observe, (1) That in this Change the Soul that was dead in Sin, is quickned: And so we are plainly informed in Eph. 2. 1. *And you hath he quickned, who were dead in Trespasses and Sins.* And in Col. 2. 13. *And you being dead in your Sins, and in the Uncircumcision of your Flesh, hath he quickned together with him.* (2) Sinners are thus quickned by having a Principle of spiritual Life put into them, or implanted in them, Ezek. 37. 5, 6. This Principle of spiritual Life, or true Holiness, put into the Souls of Men in their Regeneration, is in Scripture called by several Names, as a new Heart and a new Spirit, Ezek. 36. 26. *The Spirit which lusteth against the Flesh,* Gal. 5. 17. *The new Man,* Eph. 4. 24. *The Seed of God,* 1 John 3. 9. *The divine Nature,* 2 Pet. 1. 4. *Eternal Life,* 1 John 3. 15. All that have this divine and heavenly Principle in them, have already eternal Life, and are passed from Death to Life, John 5. 24. (3) This Principle is that by which such as have it, are inclined and disposed to live unto God, or to live holy and godly Lives. Let it be here observed, that Regeneration does not consist in any one or more good Act or Actions, but in God's qualifying and disposing the Soul to perform them. This is evident in Eph. 2. 10. *We are his Workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good Works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them.* See, for the same Purpose, Ezek. 36. 26, 27. compared with Luke 6. 43, 44, 45. The Tree must be good before the Fruit can be so.

The Change under Consideration is wrought by the Power of the Holy Spirit, the Soul being wholly passive in it. Here we may observe several Things, as (1) That the Holy Spirit is the great Agent, who worketh this Change: Therefore such as are said to be born again, are said to be *born of the Spirit*, John 3. 5, 6. Our Regeneration is our Sanctification; and this is the Sanctification of the Spirit, 2 Thes. 2. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 2. This Work is not ascribed to the Spirit, to exclude the Father and Son, but because it belongs to the Application of Redemption, which, according to the Oeconomy of the divine Persons, is especially ascribed to the Holy Spirit. The Regenerate are frequently said to be *born of God*; but then he works this Change by his Spirit. (2) The mighty Power of the Holy Ghost is put forth in working this Change: By Nothing short hereof can this Work be effected: It is, according to the Language of the Scripture, Creation-Work, Psal. 51. 10. Eph. 2. 10. and Chap. 4. 24. And being so, the Power of God is put forth in it, even the exceeding Greatness of his Power to us-ward that believe, according to the Working of his mighty Power; which wrought in Christ, when he raised

raised him from the Dead, Eph. 1. 19, 20. (3) And from hence it followeth, that the Soul passing under this great Change, is wholly passive therein. The Soul lends no Hand towards the Working this Change in it. Alas! What can that do? If it had as much Power as ever it had, it could do Nothing in such a difficult Work as this. To God only this is possible. This therefore is a Work every where ascribed to the mighty God. There is no Intimation in Scripture of the Sinner's doing any Thing towards it himself; but the contrary is plainly asserted, as in *John* 1. 13. where it is said of such as were born of the Spirit, that they were *born not of Blood, nor of the Will of the Flesh, nor of the Will of Man, but of God.* It followeth (4) That this Change is not wrought by moral Suasion, but by the immediate Energy of the Holy Ghost. By moral Suasion, I intend, the Word of God, either read or heard, or any moral Motives or Persuasions whatsoever. And when I say this Change is wrought by the immediate Influence of the Holy Ghost; I mean, that he useth no Instrument at all in the Working of it; and that it is a super-natural Change. When it is said by some to be a *physical* Change, I suppose they use *that Word* to signify that it is not wrought by moral Suasion, as I also affirm. And that indeed it is not, is from hence evident, that the Soul is passive in it, as I shewed under the last Head. For it is utterly impossible, that the Soul should be wholly passive in any Change wrought in or upon it, by moral Suasion; because the Nature of moral Suasion is to move and excite to Action, in a moral or rational Way, in which a Supposition of Passiveness is a Contradiction. When Sinners are said to be *begotten by the Word of Truth*, *Jam.* 1. 18. their *active Conversion* is intended, not that Change, in which the Soul is *passive*, betwixt which Divines are wont to distinguish; and betwixt these there is a plain Distinction made in Scripture, as has been before observed. See *Ezek.* 36. 26, 27. *Eph.* 2. 10. *Jer.* 31. 18, 19, before quoted.

It followeth from the Premises, That Regeneration is an instantaneous Change. The Work of Sanctification is indeed a gradual Work, as plainly appears in *2 Cor.* 3. 18. but the Work of Regeneration is not so. This is evident from this Reason, *viz.* that Regeneration is the very Beginning of the Work of Sanctification. When God works the Change called Regeneration, he then begins to sanctify that Soul that is the Subject of it. Of his Beginning of which Work we read, *Phil.* 1. 6. *He that has begun a good Work in you, will perform it until the Day of Jesus Christ.* Now the Beginning of any Work cannot be gradual, but must needs be instantaneous.

Therefore

Therefore every Man in the World is, at present, either in a regenerate or in an unregenerate State. There is no such Condition as wherein a Person is in neither of these, but betwixt both. As, in the natural Birth, a Person is as fully born the first Day he comes into the World, as when he comes to be of full Stature; so it is in the spiritual Birth also. Those in whom God has wrought a saving Change, are as truly converted and born again, as ever they will be, tho' they may after this grow in Grace, and grow up to the Measure of the Stature of perfect Men in Christ Jesus.

Lastly, I observe here, That the Change wrought in Regeneration is a permanent Change. It is never lost or fallen from. He that begins this good Work perfects it to the Day of Christ, *Phil. 1. 6.* before mentioned. The Seed of God remains in all that have it, *1 John 3. 9.* not but that it might be lost, had not God promised that it shall not, *Jer. 32. 40.* and elsewhere. The Image of God, with which Man was before his Fall endowed, might be lost, because God had not promised that it should not, yea, because God had threatened, that if he sinned it should; for so much was intended in that Threatning, *Gen. 2. 17.* as I have formerly shewed. But now the Case is far otherwise. God has, in the new Covenant, promised never to take his Holy Spirit from his true Saints and Servants, who have experienced the great Work of Regeneration. His Seed shall remain in them. They have eternal Life abiding in them; and they shall never be deprived of it, *John 11. 26.*



I CHAP.



CHAP. II.

That the Grace of Regeneration which has been described, is such an eminent Part of Man's Salvation, that Salvation cannot be offered to Sinners, without an Offer of it.

TO make good what I here maintain, I will (1) shew, that the Grace of Regeneration is a very eminent Part of Man's Salvation. (2) That it being so, Salvation cannot be offered to Sinners without an Offer of it.

The former of these is so manifest from what has been already said, that there is scarce any Occasion to add any Thing here, for the Confirmation of it. In the first Part of this Essay, Chap. II. Page 30. I have shewed, that Man's Salvation does very eminently consist in his Deliverance from the Power and Dominion of Sin; and in the first Chapter of this second Part, that this is done in Man's Regeneration, wherein he is set free from the reigning Power and Dominion of his own depraved Nature, which, as he comes into the World, he is a Servant and Slave unto. I have therein also shewed, that in this great Work, Man is endowed with a Principle of spiritual Life, yea, with Life eternal; so that he has everlasting Life as soon as he is born again, as in *John 5. 24.* Now wherein can Man's Salvation more eminently consist, than in his having such Things as these done for him? And add hereunto what I have already made good, viz. That all this is wholly done for sinful Men by the blessed God himself, they doing Nothing in it or to themselves, but being wholly passive therein. This serves further to clear up the Point, that this belongs to the great Salvation, of which God is the Author, and which none can work but he.

And how well does this agree with what we have in Scripture, with Relation to the Salvation of God, wrought by Jesus Christ, who came into this lower World to save his People from their Sins, as in *Matth. 1. 21. 1 Tim. 1. 15.* And this was not to save them from the Guilt of Sin only, but from the Defilement and Dominion of Sin also.

also. He accordingly gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works, Tit. 2. 14. And this is accomplished for sinful Men when they are, according to his Mercy, saved by the Washing of Regeneration, and the Renewing of the Holy Ghost, as in Tit. 3. 15. By which Words it appears, that their Regeneration is their Salvation: And this was what was by the Prophet Ezekiel foretold, in Ezek. 36. 25. *I will sprinkle clean Water upon you, and you shall be clean: From all your Filthiness, and from all your Idols will I cleanse you.* And the next Words shew how this was to be done, Ver. 26. *A new Heart also will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you, &c.*

In this, as has formerly been said, Man's Salvation does more properly consist, than in his Deliverance from the Guilt of Sin by Christ's Blood, which yet is no less a Fruit of his Death, than that. By that Way is made for Man's Happiness: By this we are, in Part, actually delivered from the Dominion and Slavery of Sin: By that we have a Right given us unto eternal Life: By this we are put in actual Possession of it, so as never to be deprived of it. See John 11. 26. and Chap. 4. 14.

Thus we see that Man's Salvation does eminently consist in his Regeneration.

I now proceed to shew, That since it is, as has been said, Salvation cannot be offered unto sinful Men, without an Offer of regenerating Grace. A Supposition of offering Salvation to Sinners, without offering to them that in which Salvation does eminently consist, carries or implies in it a plain Contradiction. Salvation is in Scripture called eternal Life, John 3. 15, 16. and frequently elsewhere. Now there is no other eternal Life mentioned in Scripture, as by God given to sinful Men, but that spiritual Life which is given in Regeneration. It is the same, I doubt not, that is intended by our Saviour, in John 17. 3. *This is Life eternal, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.* The Knowledge of God and Christ, in this Place intended, is undoubtedly given in Regeneration, and this is said to be eternal Life, not as being the Condition on which eternal Life is offered, but because eternal Life does formally and eminently consist in it. It is the great Happiness of all that have it: And they are already in a blessed State that are the Subjects of it. So was Peter, Matth. 16. 27. *Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona: For Flesh and Blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven.* Such as so know God and Christ may say, as in 1 John 5. 20. *We know that the Son of God is come, and*

hath given us an Understanding, that we should know him that is true: And we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal Life. Persons thus qualified in their Regeneration, are already possessed of the same Kind of Life, which all the Saints shall live in Heaven for ever. For Grace here and Glory hereafter differ only gradually, nor specifically, not in Kind but in Degrees; and Grace in all its Degrees is called Glory.

The Impossibility of offering Salvation to sinful Men, without offering the Grace of Regeneration to them, may be thus made further evident: God cannot be truly said to offer Salvation to Sinners without offering to them whatsoever is necessary on his Part, in order to their Salvation. God may offer Salvation to Sinners without offering to them what is necessary on their Part, in order to their Salvation, such as is the Condition required of them in order to it: But an Offer of Salvation, without an Offer of what is absolutely necessary to it, on the Part of him, by whom the Offer is supposed to be made, seemeth utterly impossible. There may be indeed the Shew of such an Offer, but really there can be none. Such a seeming Offer cannot be sincere. If a Physician in whose Power alone it is to heal a sick Man, should tell him he would bestow a plentiful Estate upon him, provided he would do something, which a Man in Health only can do, and not withal offer to restore him to Health; would any one say, that that Physician was sincere and kind, in that seeming Offer? Or would he not rather be guilty of mocking and tantalizing him therein. I do not charge the blessed God with dealing thus with sinful Men, but am shewing that he does not. A better Account may be given of his Dealings with them than this is, as by the Help of God, I hope to make evident in the Sequel of this Discourse.



CHAP. III.

Concerning the Nature of that Faith and Repentance, &c. to which the Promise of eternal Life is, in this Discourse, supposed to be made.

IT has been already said, That the Condition on which Salvation is promised to Sinners in the Gospel, does include or comprise in it Faith, Repentance, Obedience, Seeking of God, and in a Word, every Thing, whatever it be, that is so required of them, to whom the Gospel is preached, that God will not save them without it. But this is too general an Account of the Nature of the Condition of the new Covenant, or of the Condition required of Sinners, in order to their Salvation ; which is the Reason of what is here proposed to Consideration.

For whereas Faith, Repentance, Obedience, &c. or by whatever other Names these Acts are called, are of two Sorts or Kinds, according to the different States Persons are in, *viz.* either a State of Nature, I mean that Condition that all Mankind are in, while unregenerate, or not born of the Spirit : Or a regenerate and justified Estate, such as they are in, who are born of God and become new Creatures. Whereas, I say, such Acts as in Scripture, go by the Names of Faith, Repentance, &c. do specifically differ, according to the different State of the Persons, by whom they are performed ; it must needs be necessary to enquire, which of these two Kinds of Acts they are, which are required of Sinners in order to their Salvation ; and to do this is the Business of this Chapter.

Now, whereas I maintain in this Essay, That the Grace of Regeneration is comprised in the Salvation conditionally offered in the Gospel, it will evidently follow on this Supposition, That the Faith and Repentance required in the Covenant of Grace, as the Condition on which Salvation is offered to us, cannot be of that Kind which is exercised by none but regenerate and justified Persons ; for so, Sinners should be in a State of Salvation before they perform the Condition required

required of them, in order to their being saved; contrary to Reason and to Scripture also; for it is by Faith that we are justified, *Rom.* 3. 28. and 5. 1. And the Wrath of God abideth on Sinners till they believe, *John* 3. 36. I therefore conclude, That whatever it be, and by what Names soever call'd, that is required of Sinners in order to their being saved, is what they must perform before they are in a State of Salvation, and so while they are in an unregenerate and unjustified State: Which is no more than to say, before God saves them. And when awakened Sinners ask, what they shall do to be saved? as in *Acts* 2. 37. and 16. 30. this is plainly supposed in their Inquiry; and they are confirmed in this by the Answer given to them, being suitable to the Meaning of their Question.

In order therefore to my supporting the Hypothesis I have undertaken to defend, it will be necessary that I do two Things, *viz.* (1) Prove it to be impossible, that the Condition required of us should consist in any Act or Acts to be performed by us, being already born again, and by virtue of that Grace which in our Regeneration we receive. (2) That it is very possible, that the Condition to this End required of sinful Men, should be performed by them, before they are born of the Spirit; and that, by virtue of such Aids and Influences as God may afford them by his Word and Spirit, without bestowing the Grace of Regeneration on them; and before they receive this Grace: And both these Things I shall have Occasion to endeavour to confirm in the Prosecution of the Work, in which I am now engaged. But my present Design in this Chapter, is briefly to consider the Nature of those Acts, which, I say, are comprised in the Condition on which God offers to save Sinners; and wherein they differ from those, which, tho' much better, are not, yea, cannot be, required to that End.

Now here I will *first* shew, what the fundamental Ground and Reason of the Difference that is between them, is: And then, *secondly*, wherein the Difference does appear, so far as I am able to discern and discover it.

1. As to the Reason and Ground of the Difference betwixt the Acts now to be compared, the Difficulty seems not to be very great; it being evident, that the Reason thereof is this, that the Acts of such as are in a regenerate and justified Estate, do, or may, flow from an inward Principle of true Holiness; or from a Principle of spiritual Life, which, in their new Birth, they have been endowed withal,

withal, called in Scripture, as has been declared, the *new Man*, the *new Creature*, a *new Heart*, a *new Spirit*, the *Seed of God*, the *divine Nature*, &c. This Principle, being a spiritual and holy Thing, denominates the Persons spiritual and holy, who are the Subjects of it; and such as they are, their Actions are, or may be also, like the Principle from which they proceed. On the other Hand, such as are in a State of Nature, and so destitute of any such heavenly and divine Principle, as has been now mentioned; and so not spiritual, but carnal, do not, cannot, perform any such spiritual and holy Actions, as such as are regenerate can do: For Actions cannot be better than the Principle which they proceed or spring from. We are accordingly told, *that that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit, and that which is born of the Flesh is Flesh*, John 3. 6. And with this agrees that in Rom. 8. 8. *They that are in the Flesh cannot please God*: And that also 1 Cor. 2. 14, 15. *The natural Man receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God: For they are Foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all Things, &c.*

Agreeably hereunto the State of Mankind, with Relation to their Actions good and bad, seems to be fully and plainly set forth by our Saviour, Luke 6. 43, 44, 45. *For a good Tree bringeth not forth corrupt Fruit: Neither doth a corrupt Tree bring forth good Fruit. For every Tree is known by his own Fruit: For of Thorns Men do not gather Figs, nor of a Bramble-Bush gather they Grapes. A good Man, out of the good Treasure of his Heart, bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil Man, out of the evil Treasure of his Heart, bringeth forth that which is evil: For of the Abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh.* We may doubtless, from the Scriptures that have been mentioned, conclude it to be a Truth, That, in a proper and strict Sense, no Actions are holy and good, but what are performed by good or godly Persons, such as are *born of God*, or *born of the Spirit*; and which flow from an inward Principle of spiritual Life, or true Holiness.

Yet on the other Hand it may be truly affirmed, that some Actions which may be, and are, performed by Persons in an unregenerate State, which have something of Goodness in them; (tho' of an inferior Kind) and are so far acceptable to God, by whom Actions are weighed, 1 Sam. 2. 3. and who perfectly knows what of Good or Evil there is in any of them, and values them accordingly, approving them so far as they are good, and abhorring them so far forth as they are evil. But of this more hereafter: At present my Business is to shew, that there is a *real* Difference betwixt the good Actions of the Regenerate,

Regenerate, and the best that can be performed by unregenerate Persons ; and wherein that Difference lieth.

Wherefore,

I shall here, *secondly*, mention three Things, wherein I think the good Actions of the Regenerate greatly differ, and that specifically, from any that can be performed by unregenerate Persons.

1. And *first*, the Knowledge which the Regenerate have of God and spiritual Things is *experimental*, and their other Actions proceeding from such Knowledge, suitable to it ; but not so the Unregenerate.

I will here consider, *first*, that *Knowledge* which the Regenerate have of God and Things spiritual ; and then their other Actions proceeding therefrom.

1. I say, the Knowledge of the Regenerate is experimental ; which the Knowledge of the Unregenerate is not. Now to clear up this, we may observe (1) That the Elect of God have not, in their Conversion, any other objective Revelation of God, than the Non-Elect, who are never savingly converted. The external Revelation of divine Objects and Truths, which we have in the holy Scriptures, is a sufficient Ground for the Belief and assured Knowledge of them ; so that those who do not believe and know them, as they ought to do, cannot plead, that they have not sufficient Evidence of the Truth and Reality of them. If they could truly so plead, this would be a good Reason for their not believing them, which they evidently cannot have, (I speak of those who enjoy the Gospel) as appears in *Luke 16. 27, ---31*. Nay, I suppose it cannot be proved, that when the Elect believe, with a Kind of Faith peculiar to them, they have any other objective Revelation of divine Truths, and Evidence to ground their Faith on, than those have who never so believe.

2. Persons enjoying such objective Revelation and Evidence of divine and spiritual Things, need Nothing more of that Kind, in order to believing and knowing them in a gracious and holy Manner, than is afforded to those who never so believe. What is further necessary in order thereunto, is done for them in Regeneration or passive Conversion ; (of which before) and in the Assistance they have in exercising the Grace they have so received ; unto all which no new objective Revelation is required. This, I say, is done by God's giving unto Men an *Heart to know him*, *Jer. 24. 7.* and by his *opening their Eyes, to behold wondrous Things out of his Law*, *Psal. 119. 18.* And

this

this God does by working a subjective Change ; that is, he rectifies the Organ, and restores the depraved Faculty. He does it not by sending new Light, in other objective Revelations, which the Subjects of such a Change had not before : For it is plainly supposed in the Places but now quoted, that Persons, for whom this is done, have, before the doing it for them, a sufficient objective Revelation of the Things which they are required to believe and know.

3. The Knowledge of spiritual Things, in this Way obtained, is *experimental*, and such as none but the Regenerate have or can have. All the Knowledge which the Unregenerate have, or can have, of divine and spiritual Things, called the *deep Things of God*, 2 Cor. 2. 10, is quite of another Kind, *viz.* only by a natural Assent on Testimony unto the Truth of the Things believed. And their Assurance of such Things, in this Way, can arise no higher than their Knowledge of him that testifies will lay a Foundation for, and the Reasons which they do, or may see of the Credibility of the Things testified, will be sufficient to produce ; which sometimes may be a considerable Measure of Certainty : Yet this is vastly different from, and no Ways comparable to, that experimental Knowledge which the Regenerate do attain.

The Difference betwixt the two Kinds of Knowledge I am speaking of, is, I say, very great and plain, as the Difference is great betwixt what we know by Report only, and what we know experimentally, by Seeing, Feeling, Tasting, &c. See 1 John 1. 1. A sick Person, whose Appetite is vitiated, and who has lost his Relish of Meat and Drink ; tho' he can believe such as commend this and the other Sort of either, because he reckons them credible ; yet cannot have the same Assurance of the Goodness of the Things he has often heard praised, as he has, who being in Health can, and does, experience the Sweetness of the Things he feeds on, and by which he is strengthened and nourished, and so certainly knows the Benefit of.

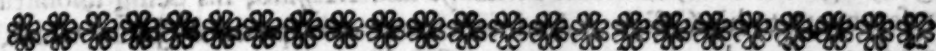
Thus Sin is a Disease, which has deprived Mankind of their Appetite and Relish of spiritual Things ; therefore *the carnal Mind is Enmity against God*, Rom. 8. 7. with which we may compare, 1 Cor. 2. 14. but lately mentioned. But in Regeneration, this woful Distemper of Men's Souls is, in a good Measure, cured ; so that they find and experience the Certainty and Excellency of spiritual Objects ; and can converse with them with Pleasure and Delight, as the Scriptures plentifully shew. Such as please may read and compare, Job 42. 5, 6. Psal. 34. 8. 1 Pet. 2. 2, 3. Psal. 119. 97. Cant. 2. 1. 1 Joh. 1. 3.

From this experimental Knowledge called *Wisdom*, and *spiritual Understanding*, Col. 1. 9. there always proceed such Actions as are suitable thereunto, and as become those that are spiritually wise, such as are the genuine Fruits and proper Effects of the *Knowledge of the Holy*, mention'd Prov. 1. 7. Psal. 111. 10. Job 28. 28. also Prov. 2. 10, 11, 12.

2. Another Thing wherein, I think, the good Actions of the Regenerate differ from the best that can be performed by any unregenerate Persons, is this, that they are performed out of such a Love to God, as has his infinite Perfections for the formal Reason and Ground of it. Here I shall observe, (1) That unregenerate Persons may perform Actions that are materially good, tho' they have no Love to God at all; yea, tho' they have no Regard to him. It is not to be doubted, but that unregenerate Sinners may believe there is a God; and have a Fear and Dread of him, as well as Devils, Jam. 2. 19. And out of such a Fear of him they may yield Obedience to his Commands, tho' they love him not. (2) Unregenerate Persons may have some Kind of Love to God, which may put them on doing many Things which he requires them to do. There be some unregenerate Persons that have a very considerable Respect and Veneration for the great God that made them, and continually preserves them. They therefore love not to hear his Name blasphemed; and the Kindness they may apprehend they have received from him, may influence them to do many Things, which they may think good in themselves, and pleasing in his Sight; and they may apprehend that God is so gracious as to reward them well for the good Works which they perform. There may be in the Unregenerate, a Kind of natural Love to God, answerable to the Apprehensions they have of some Goodness in him, as well as such a Love to their Neighbours; even common Grace may go thus far. (3) But no unregenerate Person ever loved and obeyed God, on the Account of the admirable Perfections of his Nature; so that his Persuasion of his infinite Goodness, arising from his own experimental Acquaintance with him, was the formal Reason of this his Love to him, and Desire to do that which would please him; so that they would do the same, tho' they themselves had no Benefit by it. I suppose, That he that cannot do thus, is still in a State of Nature, and does not know and love God in a gracious Manner: And has not, in the Sense of the Scripture, *tasted that the Lord is gracious*, 1 Pet. 2, 3. Psal. 34. 8.

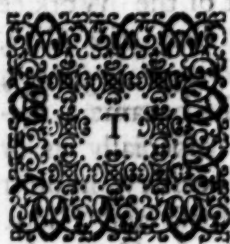
3. I think the Regenerate only can perform good Actions, with an Aim and Design to glorify God, as the ultimate End of them. There is, as I think, no Doubt to be made, but that the Unregenerate may, and sometimes do, aim at God's Glory, in some of their Actions. Such may be persuaded, That to glorify God *here*, is the only Way to obtain eternal Life *hereafter*; and this may put them upon endeavouring to glorify God's Name. But none but a gracious Soul can aim at God's Glory, as the ultimate End of what he does; and tho' he should see no Advantage to himself by it. But I think every truly holy Soul would do this. However, God does not require us to aim at his Glory, without any Eye or View to our own Advantage: These are Things, by God himself, so joined together, that we ought not to go about to separate them.

So much may suffice to have said in this Place, concerning the Difference of the gracious and holy Actions of those who are already passed from Death to Life, and those Actions in which, I suppose, the Condition, on which Salvation is offered unto Sinners, does consist. This will necessarily be further spoken to hereafter.



C H A P. IV.

That GOD, in offering JESUS CHRIST, with all his Benefits, to sinful Men, must needs offer them the Grace of Regeneration.



THAT there is in the Gospel, a gracious Offer of Jesus Christ, with all his Benefits, made to Sinners, is, I think, in the Ministry of the Word of God, very frequently asserted, by orthodox Preachers of the Gospel: How agreeable to Truth, I shall in this Chapter consider: And whether, if this be true, it will not from thence follow, That Sinners have in the Gospel, an Offer of the Grace of Regeneration made to them; which is the Point I am endeavouring to maintain.

Now in order to the clearing up of this Truth, I shall (1) shew, That there is, in the Gospel, an Offer of Jesus Christ himself to Sinners. (2) That, having an Offer of Jesus Christ himself, they have, with him, an Offer of all his Benefits. (3) That, having an Offer of

all his Benefits, they must needs have an Offer of the Grace of Regeneration. To these Things I will speak severally,

1. I say Sinners have in the Gospel an Offer of Jesus Christ himself made to them.

This I shall take for granted, it being, as I suppose, generally acknowledged by all that own that Sinners have Salvation conditionally offered to them. In *John* 1. 11, 12. we have a plain Proof of this Truth,

But it may be proper here to observe, That when it is said, that Sinners have in the Gospel an Offer of Jesus Christ, we must not understand merely his Person, God-Man; but his Person considered as cloathed with his Office of Mediator betwixt God and Mankind; and every Way qualified and enclined to execute that Office; yea, as having undertaken it on the Behalf of all that will receive him, or come up to the Terms on which he is offered to them: These Names, *Jesus Christ*, are plainly expressive of the Office he bears, and his being anointed, or set apart to the Execution of it; the Name *Jesus* signifying a *Saviour*, and that of *Christ* and *Messiah*, his being anointed or set apart to his Office: And whenever we speak of Jesus Christ, as being offered unto Sinners, we should not think his Person only to be understood, but his Person cloathed with the Office of a Saviour, as in *Matth.* 1. 21. *Thou shalt call his Name JESUS; for he shall save his People from their Sins.* Now this Office of a Saviour includes in it those of Priest, Prophet, and King.

Nor is Jesus Christ, who is offered unto Sinners, to be considered merely as cloathed with the Office of a Mediator, but as perfectly qualified for the Execution of it, or Accomplishment of the Work he has undertaken to perform, viz. the bringing many Sons unto Glory, *Heb.* 2. 10. To this End he was made perfect through Sufferings, as is said in the same Verse; not only as hereby he became a Pattern of Patience to his suffering Saints, but more especially as by this he laid the Foundation of all that still remained necessary, in order to their being bro't into a State of perfect Happiness and Glory. Unto this that well agreeth, *1 Pet.* 3. 18. *For Christ also once suffered for Sins, the Just for the Unjust: that he might bring us to God, being put to Death in the Flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.* To the same Purpose it is said of him, *Heb.* 5. 9. *That being made perfect, he became the Author of eternal Salvation unto all them that obey him.* The Price of Man's Redemption being once paid, their great Saviour might comfortably go on and accomplish all that was further necessary

in order to their Happiness, in their effectual Calling, Justification, and Regeneration, &c.

When Jesus Christ is spoken of, as offered to Sinners, we must also consider him as filled with all that Good which is treasured up in him, to be communicated to all those whom he eternally saves. *For it hath pleased the Father, that in him all Fulness should dwell*, Col. 1. 19. *And in him are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge*, Chap. 2. 30. And we are told, in John 1. 14. That he was *full of Grace and Truth*. And in verse 16. such as have an Interest in him are bro't in saying, *Of his Fulness have all we received, and Grace for Grace*. Jesus Christ is indeed that *Fountain* of spiritual Good, of which we read, *Zech. 13. 1.* In him therefore *all our Springs are*, Psal. 87. 7. He is a full Repository of all those good Things that needy Souls can desire, and look out after; and unto all, to whom he is Offered, he is offered full as he is.

2. Together with, and in Jesus Christ, Sinners have an Offer of *all his Benefits*. This is indeed a plain Consequence of what is above said, *viz.* That Sinners have an Offer of Christ with all his Fulness. But for the further clearing of this Point, we must here consider, (1) What we may here understand by Christ's Benefits. (2) How it appears that these are all offered unto Sinners in and with him.

(1) Let us here consider what we are to understand by Christ's Benefits. Now unto this, in a Word, I say, That by these Benefits, I understand, all those special and everlasting Mercies, which God bestows on all, and only those, whom he eternally saves; and which are called *Things that accompany Salvation*, Heb. 6. 9. What these Things are, I have more particularly shown, Part I. and Chap. II. of this Essay, where it appears, Page 30. That Man's Salvation contains in it, as an eminent Part of it, his Deliverance from the reigning Power and Dominion of Sin, in and by his Regeneration. Such as please may see what is there said, but much rather what the Scripture says, *Matth. 1. 21. Tit. 2. 14. and Chap. 3. 5.*

(2) I must shew that all these Benefits, not any one of them excepted, are in the Gospel offered unto Sinners in and with Jesus Christ. They cannot be either offered or given in any other Way, than that now express'd. I mean, That, according to the Way which God has stated in the Gospel, they cannot. The natural Order and Reason of Things will not admit that they should. For,

First,

First, These Things being all reposit in Christ, as has been shewn, there can, I suppose, be no Way shewed, how any Person can be a Partaker of any of them, without being made Partaker of Jesus Christ, in whom they are all treasured up. Those therefore that have an Interest in any of them, are said in Scripture to have the same in him. And it would be preposterous in any Person to desire, or labour to obtain, any of them, in any other Way, than by getting an Interest in Jesus Christ himself. Those that have an Interest in any one of those Things, are therefore in Scripture said to have them in him. In him they have their Righteousness, and Strength, and their Life, *Isai.* 45. 24, 25. *1 John* 5. 11. *Gal.* 2. 20.

Secondly, Union with Christ is therefore necessary in order to Persons being Partakers of any of these Benefits. Never did any one Soul partake of any of them, without being first united to Christ. They are all conveyed from him as the Head of his Church, which is his Body, unto the Members of it; or as from a Vine to it's Branches. For this the Scriptures are full and plain, as may be seen, *Col.* 1. 18, 19. and *Chap.* 2. 19. *John* 1. 16. *Eph.* 1. 22, 23. See also *John* 15. 1, ---6.

But there being several Senses in which Persons may be said to be united to Jesus Christ, I shall have Occasion in my next Chapter distinctly to consider them, and shew, in what Sense Persons must be united to Jesus Christ, before they can partake of any of his special Benefits. At Present it is sufficient to my Purpose that the Scriptures are plain and full, That Union with, or to, him is necessary to that End; and that he must become our's in Order to our partaking of any of his special Favours: Even as a Woman must marry a Man, in order to her having such an Interest in his Estate, as Wives have in the Estate of their Husbands. And thus much may suffice for my fourth Chapter.



C H A P.



CHAP. V.

That neither the Grace of Regeneration, nor any Act flowing from it, or by which it is implied, is the Condition on which Salvation is offered to Sinners, and consequently the same must be comprehended in the Salvation offered to them.

HAVING in the foregoing Chapter endeavoured to prove, That Sinners have in the Gospel, an Offer of Jesus Christ and all his Benefits made to them; and consequently, of Regeneration, which is one of the principal of them: I am apprehensive there is one Exception that will be apt to be made against the Argument there insisted on, viz. That Regeneration itself, (or which is in Effect the same Thing, an Act of Faith flowing from it, or implying it) is the Condition on which the Offer of Salvation is made; and consequently cannot be comprised in the Salvation offered; because one and the same Thing cannot be both the Condition on which Salvation is offered, and the Benefit itself to be obtained on that Condition; I intend, in this Chapter, not only to show the Faultiness of such an Objection; but also to make some Advantage of the Consequence made use of in it, for the Support of the Hypothesis which it is designed to overthrow.

I then readily acknowledge, That the same Thing cannot be both the Condition on which Salvation is offered, and either a Part or the Whole of the Salvation offered on it. If therefore it can be proved, That either Regeneration itself, or any Act flowing from it or implied in it, is required of Sinners, as the Condition on which Salvation is offered to them, it will plainly follow, that it can be no Part of the Salvation, on that Condition offered.-----But then, on the other Hand,

Hand, if it is or may be sufficiently proved, that Regeneration is a Part, and an eminent and principal Part too, of the Salvation offered in the Gospel, it will as firmly follow, that it cannot be the Condition on which God offers that Salvation. If therefore I have proved, as I think I have, That Regeneration is comprised in the Salvation offered to Sinners; or if I can still, as I intend, make good this Assertion, then it will appear not to be comprised or implied in the Condition. However, if I have not yet proved this in the Way expressed, I hope I shall sufficiently evince it in what remains to be spoken in this Chapter.

To go on therefore, there are now two Things before me to be made good, *viz.* (1) That neither the Grace of Regeneration, nor any Act flowing from it, can be the Condition on which Salvation is offered to Sinners. (2) That from hence this Conclusion followeth, That the Grace given in Regeneration must needs be comprised in the Salvation offered: ----- And these Things I shall endeavour severally to illustrate and confirm.

1. I will endeavour to shew that neither the Grace of Regeneration, nor any Act flowing from it, and so involved and implied in it, can be the Condition on which Salvation is offered, as above.

(1) I say, the Grace of Regeneration itself, cannot be the Condition on which God offers Salvation to sinful Men. For *First*, The Condition on which Salvation is offered to Sinners, is something required of them to be done by them, which the Grace of Regeneration is not. The Condition required of Sinners is something which they are directed to do, in Answer to such Enquiries of awakened Souls as these, *What shall we do?* Acts 2. 37. and, *What shall I do to be saved?* Acts 16. 30. It is something called in Scripture *Believing, Repenting, Obeying, Seeking the Lord, Calling on his Name, &c.* as I have formerly shewed. But the Grace of Regeneration is no act at all, either of God, or of the Sinner, tho' it be God's Gift. It is an infused Habit or Principle, by which they that have it are disposed to act as they should do, not their acting. For it is called in Scripture, *a new Heart, a new Spirit, the new Creature, the Seed of God, the Image of God, the divine Nature, &c.* none of which Words or Names signify Actions, but a Principle of Grace or Holiness wrought in Men's Souls by the Holy Spirit, *creating them anew in Christ Jesus unto good Works, that they should walk in them*, Eph. 2. 10. and Ezek. 36. 26, 27. *Secondly*, The Grace of Regeneration cannot be the Condition on which

which Salvation is offered to Sinners, because they cannot have it before they are in a State of Salvation ; which to its being a Condition on which Salvation is offered, is necessarily required. But this will by and by be made further evident.

(2) No Act flowing from the Grace of Regeneration, or implying it, can be the Condition on which Salvation is offered. No such Act, I mean, as any Person performs by the Help of that Grace, which, in his Regeneration, he receives. And to make good what I here assert, I will shew, (1) That if that could be which is here denied, then a Sinner might be vitally united to Jesus Christ, while he has no Covenant-Interest in him. And (2) Then also might a Sinner be *born of God*, and *born of the Spirit*, before he is justified by the Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ to him : Neither of which can be true, or may by any Means be admitted.

1. I say, if any Act, or Acts, flowing from the Grace of Regeneration, or implying it, were the Condition on which Salvation is offered, then it would follow, that a Person may be *vitally* united to Christ before he has any Covenant-Interest in him and his Benefits ; which must be denied. I suppose there are scarce any of our Divines that will deny this Consequence, because the Conclusion or Inference is, what they generally hold and maintain : For they think an Act of Faith, flowing from a Principle of Grace given in Regeneration, is required in order to our Salvation ; nor do they at all doubt, but that all in whom a Principle of Grace is wrought, are vitally united unto Christ, and that before they have any Covenant-Interest in him : For they suppose it to be impossible, that any Person should have a Covenant-Interest in Jesus Christ that has not believed in him, and this with that Kind of Faith which is given in Regeneration ; and which can be only exerted by a regenerate Soul. It is not therefore supposed, that there is any Absurdity in the Inference I draw from the Proposition I oppose. What, therefore, is here incumbent on me is to shew, that it is impossible that any Person should be vitally united to Jesus Christ, before he has a Covenant-Interest in him ; and consequently such a Right to his Benefits also.

I will therefore here endeavour to make it manifest, that this is impossible. And to this End I will briefly shew (1) What I take to be imported in a vital Union to Jesus Christ. (2) What I intend by a Covenant-Interest in him. And then I will shew (3) How unreasonable

reasonable it is to imagine, That a Person that has not such an Interest in Christ and his Benefits, may yet be vitally united to him.

1. And *first*, I will here shew, what I suppose to be imported in that vital Union with Jesus Christ, whereof I here speak.

Now to this I say, (1) That this imports that the great Work of Regeneration is really wrought in such a Soul ; or that he is born of God, born of the Spirit ; that God has given him a new Heart, and a new Spirit ; restored his Image in him, which he had lost by the Fall ; endowed him with a Principle of spiritual Life ; planted the Seed of Grace in his Soul ; made him Partaker of the divine Nature. All this must needs be implied in a vital Union with Jesus Christ : For it is by the Soul's Conformity to the Image of the Son of God, or by his having Christ formed in him, that this his Union with him is bro't about or effected. We are therefore told, that *he that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit*, 1 Cor. 6. 17. (2) Such as these are actually become the Temples of the Holy Ghost, having the Spirit of God, Father and Son, dwelling in them, as in 1 Cor. 6. 15, 16, 17, and ver. 19. And God dwells and walks in them, 2 Cor. 6. 16. So that they are become an Habitation of God thro' the Spirit, Eph. 2. 22. and Christ lives in them, Gal. 2. 20. (3) Such as these have already eternal Life ; and shall not come into Condemnation, but are already passed from Death to Life, and have eternal Life abiding in them, so that they shall never die. See John 5. 24. 1 John 3. 14, 15. and Chap. 5. 12. also John 11. 25, 26. (4) Such as these God has already began to glorify, as plainly appears, 2 Cor. 3. 18. *The Spirit of God and of Glory resteth on them.*

2. I must next shew, what I intend by a Covenant-Interest in Jesus Christ and his Benefits : And here, in general, I say, I hereby intend a just Right and Title to them, by the Promises of God in the new Covenant ; and that unto Men's having such a Right, their Performance of the Condition on which Jesus Christ and his Benefits are offered, or conditionally promised, is absolutely necessary.

Now, with Respect to this Interest in, or Right to, Christ and his Benefits, I think it necessary to say several Things.

1. And *first*, this supposeth, that there are, in the Gospel, conditional Offers and Promises made of these Things unto sinful Men, plainly importing, that they shall become theirs on the Performance of the Condition or Conditions to that End required of them. But on this I need not enlarge, having before spoken fully to it.

2. That

2. That these Conditions must be performed before a Right can be had to the Things conditionally promised. The very Notion of a conditional Offer or Promise does plainly imply so much.

3. I acknowledge, that, according to my Hypothesis, a Sinner must, in order to his having such a Right, perform the now intended Condition, before he has the great Work of Regeneration wrought in him ; and consequently, Strength given to him in his Regeneration is not required in order to it : Yet I believe, that, in order to this, a Sinner needs the Help and Influences of God, by his Word and Spirit.

4. Sinners can have no Right to any of the Benefits purchased by Jesus Christ for them, and laid up in him, 'till they have a Right to, and Interest in himself, as has been already shewed.

5. Union with Jesus Christ is also absolutely necessary, in order to our partaking of his special Benefits. They are all communicated by, and derived from him, as he is Head of his Church, *Col. 1. 18, 19.* and *Chap. 2. 19.* *Eph. 1. 22, 23.* also *John 15.* from the Beginning to Verse 6.

6. The Grace of Regeneration cannot be received from Christ, by his People, as their *vital Head*, or as being in such a vital Union with him as I lately described. This is most obvious, because no Person is so united to him, 'till he is regenerate or born again ; it being by the Bestowment of the Grace of Regeneration on any Soul, that such an Union with Christ is brought about or effected. It is by putting his holy Spirit into some of the Children of Men, that Jesus Christ unites them to himself ; and thus all that are *joined to the Lord are one Spirit* with him : And hence it appears, that they receive not the Grace of Regeneration from him, as being, in this Sense their Head ; but to the End he may be so, and they his Members.

It is therefore by a *foederal Union* with Jesus Christ, that his People are made Partakers of regenerating Grace. That Union with him is to this End necessary, I have already shewed. All his Benefits are communicated to his People, as from a Head to its Members, and without some Union with him, none of his saving Benefits can be received by them. But it is evident, that in order to their receiving the Grace of Regeneration, they can have no other than a relative Union to him ; and this can be no other than a foederal Union with him : And this, I say, they may and must have, before they can partake of regenerating Grace.

What I have here said I shall endeavour to make good by the following Considerations.

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1. There

1. There is a *covenant* as well as a *vital Union* betwixt Jesus Christ and his People. That there is a *vital Union* betwixt him and them, is generally acknowledged among us. This I have spoken of before in Page 34. That there is also a *Covenant-Union* betwixt our Saviour and his People, I suppose to be likewise acknowledged; and this is that of which I here speak, and the Nature whereof I would explain.

1. Here then, in the first Place, I must observe, That there is a *Covenant-Union* betwixt God and some of the Children of Men, immediately arising, or resulting, from a mutual Agreement or Stipulation betwixt him and them, which does not of it self entitle those who are taken into it, to any of the saving Benefits of the Covenant entered into. This will be manifest if the Nature of the Covenant intended (I mean the Covenant of Grace) be a little considered; and who the Parties are that are engaged in it.

And, in general, I here say, that the Covenant by which this Union is brought about, being conditional, the Union intended cannot be effected, 'till the Condition be performed. The Covenant I here intend is the new Covenant, or the Covenant of Grace; and this is a conditional Covenant, as I have sufficiently proved in the first Part of this Essay. In this Jesus Christ and all his Benefits are conditionally promised to sinful Men. The Condition therein required of Sinners, is that they lay hold on the Covenant, or submit to the Terms of it, and then perform what is required in it, in order to their enjoying the Good of it. What that is which is required, has already been sufficiently declared. By doing this, Sinners obtain a Right to Jesus Christ, with all his Benefits offered to them; and so have such a Relation to him as they never had before. And in this Relation, whereof I now speak, their covenant Union with him, which I here intend, does consist.

But I shall endeavour to clear up this more fully by a brief Observation of several Things here following, as (1) That there is a covenant Relation betwixt God and his People, which does immediately arise and result from their taking hold of the Covenant, or submitting to the Terms of it. Tho' God does, in the Gospel, offer to enter into Covenant with Sinners, this Covenant is not actually made betwixt him and them, 'till there be a Consent of both Parties to the Terms of it. This is done on the Part of Sinners invited to come into it, when they *take hold of God's Covenant*: In doing of which they are said to *join themselves to the Lord to serve him*, *Isai. 56. 3, 4, 5.* and *Jer. 50. 5.* When this is done there is a mutual covenant Engagement

agement betwixt him and them, as in *Deut.* 26. 17, 18. In the Language of the new Testament, this is done by a professed Subjection to the Gospel, and our being baptized in (or into) the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, 2 *Cor.* 9. 13. and *Matth.* 28. 19. Now, tho' hereby there is a covenant Relation and Union brought about or effected betwixt God and the Sinners thus taking hold of the Covenant, as is expressed in the Places quoted; yet this is not that Union with Jesus Christ, which I principally here intend: For Persons may be thus joined to the Lord, and yet never be saved, as appears, *John* 15. 1,---6. and *Rom.* 9. 3, 4. and several other Places. Wherefore (2) There is yet a nearer covenant Relation, or soederal Union betwixt Christ and his People, than that which has been now mentioned, which is come into when Men come up to the Terms, or perform the Condition, on which Christ and his Benefits are, in the Gospel, offered to them. For whereas, 'till this is done, God's covenant People are but in a State of Probation, in order to their obtaining the everlasting Mercies offered to them in the new Covenant, on a Condition yet depending, not being fulfilled; they having now performed that Condition, have a real and just Right to all that Good, of which before they had no more than a conditional Promise made to them.

Having thus declared what I intend, both by that vital and covenant Union, which is betwixt Christ and those belonging to him, I shall proceed,

3. To shew how unreasonable a Thing it is for any to imagine it possible, that a Person who has no such covenant Interest in, or Relation to, Jesus Christ, as that but now described, may yet be vitally united to him, in the Manner before Expressed, (Page 74.) A Person vitally united to Jesus Christ, is made an actual Partaker of him; and Christ has taken Possession of his Soul, to dwell and walk in for ever: They who are thus joined to the Lord are one Spirit with him, 1 *Cor.* 6. 17. and so in such a Union as that mentioned by Jesus Christ himself, in *John* 17. 21, 22, 23. *That they may be one, as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they may be one in us:----- and the Glory which thou gavest me, I have given them: that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.* And such a Union as that also by him intended, *Rev.* 3. 20. *Behold I stand at the Door and knock, if any Man hear my Voice, and open the Door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*----- Is it possible that they should enjoy Christ, in such an Union with him? For my part, I am otherwise persuaded.

If

If Sinners may be thus made Partakers of Christ, before they have any covenant Interest in him, or Right to his Benefits, What Occasion is there of a conditional Offer of him to be made to them in the Gospel? And how unaccountable is it, that any do affirm, That Sinners must be vitally united to Jesus Christ, before they can have a covenant Right to him; yea, before they can perform the Condition on which he is offered in the Gospel? I cannot think that such an Union with Christ, in order to our having a covenant Interest in him and his Benefits, is necessary; but on the contrary, That our having a covenant Interest in him is necessary, in order to our having such a vital Union with him: And that Sinners, who are eternally saved, do not perform the Condition on which Christ is offered, after they are thus united to him, but in order to their being so. Christ stands and knocks at the Sinner's Door, and the Sinner opens to him before he comes in to him, as appears by the Text lately mentioned, *Rev. 3. 20.* If it be said, that no Man can possibly open his Heart to Christ, by any Assistances he can receive from him, until Christ be vitally united to him; as this is to beg the Thing in Question, so it seems to contradict the Text, which supposeth the Sinner to open to Christ knocking at the Door of his Heart, before he enters, and takes up his Abode in it. Christ can knock loud enough to stir up the Sinner to open to him, before he actually enters and takes Possession of his Soul.

There is one Thing more here necessary to be said, before I proceed to another Argument; *viz.* That tho' a *covenant* Union to, or with Jesus Christ, be only necessary, in order to a Sinner's partaking of the Grace of Regeneration, or indeed possible to be had; yet that Grace being once received, all future Supplies of more of the same Kind flow from him to his Members, as *vitally* united to him, and living Members of that mystical Body, whereof he is the living Head. Hence it is that many Texts of Scripture, which speak of those Influences and Supplies of Grace, which Christ's Members receive from him, do plainly suppose and imply their being in a State of vital Union with him, as *John 1. 16.* and *Chap. 15. v. 1,---6.* But such Union cannot be necessary to the *first* Grace, but that is necessary to it, as being immediately effected by it.

I now proceed to a second Argument, to prove, That no Act or Acts flowing from the Grace of Regeneration, or implied in it, can be the Condition on which Salvation is offered. And the Argument which I shall now make use of is this, That if this might be, then

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then may Sinners be made Partakers of the Grace of Regeneration, before they are justified by the Imputation of the Righteousness of Jesus Christ to them, which it is impossible they should be. Note here, that, by *before*, as formerly, I intend *before*, in order of Nature, and not in respect of Time. I acknowledge that in this Sense, these Mercies are granted together, and at once; but if we respect the natural Order of their being given, Justification or Absolution from the Guilt of Sin, goes before the other.

Before I proceed to make this good, I will, for preventing Mistakes, take Notice of a necessary Distinction, with Respect to Man's Justification before God, or by him. That which I intend is this, That by our Justification we may understand, either our Justification by the Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ to us, or our being accounted and declared righteous, on the Account of our Interest in that Righteousness, after the Imputation thereof. As these are Things evidently distinguishable, in respect of the Nature and Order of them; so they are no less plainly distinguished in the holy Word of God. Justification, in Scripture, sometimes signifies the making of a Man righteous, by the Imputation of the Righteousness of Jesus Christ to him, or by the Gift of that Righteousness conferred on him, as in *Rom. 5. 17.* And this agrees well with the Meaning of the Word; for, as to glorify signifies to make glorious, so to justify signifies to make just or righteous; and this is in Scripture used for a Sinner's being made just or righteous, by the Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ to him, *Rom. 4. 5, 6.* But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the Ungodly, his Faith is counted to him for Righteousness: Even as David also describeth the Blessedness of the Man unto whom God imputeth Righteousness without Works. Thus such as are unjust and ungodly before, and until they are justified, are by their Justification made righteous, by a Righteousness imputed to them, the Righteousness of Jesus Christ being unto and upon them, as in *Rom. 3. 22.*

But then, Justification is sometimes in Scripture taken for the declaring and pronouncing one righteous, who really is so, before such a Sentence is pronounced: And in this Sense, to justify, is a forensick Word or Term, taken from Courts of Justice, and is in that Sense commonly used among Men. In this Sense of the Word, Men never should, and God never does justify any, but those who are just before such Justification. For he that justifieth the Wicked, and he that condemneth the Just, even they both are an Abomination to the Lord, *Prov. 17. 15.* Taking Justification in this Sense, a Man must be just and holy

holy too, before God will justify him. And there is no Doubt to me, but that when the Apostle *James* affirms, That a Man is justified by Works, he useth the Word in this Sense: For thus God justifieth none but such as have both an imputed and an inherent Righteousness. But in the first Sense mentioned, which is that in which I use the Word in this Discourse, a Man has no true Righteousness at all before God justifieth him, by the Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ to him: And thus, for God to justify the Ungodly, is a Word or Term peculiar to the Gospel; and is never used in any Courts of Justice among Men, that I know of.

This being the Sense in which I use the Word, as I intimated, what I here affirm is, That a Sinner is not, cannot be regenerated by the Spirit of God, or born of the Spirit, before he is justified; and consequently no A&T flowing from the Grace of Regeneration, or implying it, can be the Condition on which Salvation is offered, or given: And I will endeavour to make good both the Antecedent and Consequence, or Inference from it.

1. I say, That no Sinner is, or can be regenerated by the Spirit of God, before he is justified by the Righteousness of Christ imputed to him; or that Justification is, in Order of Nature, before Regeneration, and not after it.

To make this good, I will shew, that it will not consist with that perpetual or standing Rule of Righteousness, which God entred into with Mankind in *Adam*, while in Innocence, to regenerate sinful Men by his holy Spirit, while they are in an unjustified Estate: And this I shall endeavour to clear up in several Observations, which here follow.

(1) The Covenant of Works which God entred into with Mankind while in Innocency, was designed to be a standing Rule of relative Justice, betwixt himself and them, according to which he would deal with them for ever. This has been well observed and asserted by the learned and very judicious Mr. SAMUEL WILLARD, in his Exposition of the Assemblies Catechism, (Page 150.) Hence all God's Transactions with Mankind have hitherto been, and ever will be ordered according to that standing Rule. If therefore, there could not have been a Way found out wherein the Justice of God, and the Honour of his Law might have been vindicated, yea, every Tittle of that Law fulfilled, as in *Matth.* 5. 17, 18. no Flesh could have been saved. With this agreeth what we have in *Rom.* 3. 26, and *v.* 31. also *Chap.* 8. *v.* 4.

2. According

2. According to the Tenor of this now mentioned Covenant, a perfect Righteousness was required in order to Man's having Life and Happiness; and Death was threatned for the least Offence against it, as appears in *Gen. 2. 17.* and *Gal. 3. 10, 12.*

3. By sinning against God, Man forfeited and lost that Life, which, in a Way of Obedience, he might have obtained, and became subject to Death. In which Death not only *Adam* and *Eve* themselves, but all their Posterity were involved, *Rom. 5. 12.* and Chap. 3. 23. *Gal. 3. 10. Rom. 6. 23.*

4. The Death which by Sin Mankind brought upon themselves, included in it, as one special Part or Branch of it, the Loss of God's Image, and the Corruption and Depravation of Man's Nature, which we call *habitual Corruption*, or *original Sin*. This, I suppose, I have sufficiently proved in Part I. Chap. 1. of this Essay. Here let it be remarked, (1) That the Sin by which Mankind lost their Right or Title to Life, or rather, by which they fell short of a Right to it, was their eating the forbidden Fruit. By this Sin the Covenant of Works was wholly broken, and the Life promised, utterly lost, and the Death threatned, fully merited. (2) Man's loosing and being deprived of God's Image, the before mentioned Depravation of his Nature, was no Part of this Sin, but a penal Effect and Consequent of it, as I have shewed in the former Part of this Essay. Indeed this Corruption of Man's Nature, after his Fall, does very much consist in it, as well as in his actual Transgressions; and the same may be said concerning the Devils. But what I say here is, that the Depravation or Corruption of Man's Nature was not the Sin by which he brake the Covenant of Works, but a Punishment of it.

Indeed Man, after his Fall, went on sinning against the moral Law, considered as a Rule of Righteousness; but the Covenant of Works, as a Covenant, he could not more effectually break than he had already done. Nor did God after Man's Fall, require Obedience of him, as the Condition of that Covenant which he had already broken, and the Good whereof he had already forfeited, but treated with him wholly on the Foot, and according to the Terms, of a new Covenant, which he had begun to reveal and make known to him, *Gen. 3. 15.* For had it not been for this, there would have been no Room left for any Treaty with Sinners, in order to their Obedience and Happiness. All that could have remained would have been the full Execution of that Sentence of Death on Mankind, which they

had already begun to feel the Effects of. Please to compare what I have now said, with Part I. Chap. I. Page 22, 23.

5. If a Man may be made Partaker of a Principle of spiritual Life, one Moment in Time, or Reason, before he has an Interest in Jesus Christ and his meritorious Righteousness, I see no Reason why he may not have this Life for ever, and that in its full Perfection, without ever having any Interest in Jesus Christ and his Righteousness at all. If we may begin to enjoy such a Life, without first having any Interest in Christ, why may we not enjoy the same Life forever, without having any Interest in him? And then, what great Need have we of him, who is the Head of the Body, the Church: Who is the Beginning, the First-born from the Dead, that in all Things he might have the Pre-eminence, Col. 1. 18.

Having now, as I think, sufficiently shewn the Impossibility of any Person's being regenerated by the Spirit of God, till he is first (in order of Nature) justified by Christ's Righteousness imputed to him; I must now proceed to make good the Consequence which I drew from that Assertion, viz. That no Act flowing from the Grace given in Regeneration, or implying it, can be the Condition on which Salvation is offered: And this is so evident a Conclusion, from the Proposition from whence I infer it, that it is scarce possible to be made more evident, by any Thing that can be said to make it manifest. Is it not obvious to common Sense and Reason, that the Performance of the Condition, on which any Benefit is offered, must go, at least, in order of Nature, before the obtaining such a Benefit? If then Justification be, in order of Nature, before Regeneration, how should any Act flowing from the Grace given in Regeneration, or implying it, be the Condition on which Justification and Salvation are offered to Sinners?

But when I have thus argued, I have been sometimes told, That Justification and Regeneration are both together in Time, and that my Distinction of one of these being, in order of Nature, before the other, is too nice and critical. To which I answer, That there are Hundreds of other Cases, wherein learned Men do not think such a Distinction too nice; as when Sinners are told, that they must come to, and believe in Jesus Christ, before they may expect to be justified; when yet, those that tell them so do believe and teach, that a Sinner so soon as he lays hold on Christ by Faith, that he is freely justified. And in the very Case, on which I am here discoursing, the learned

Dr. OWEN, disputing with Mr. BAXTER, says, "Absolution in Heaven, (as I call it) is before our actual believing in order of Time, I have no where said, but only in order of Nature; and that Mr. BAXTER hath not disproved." By believing here, the Doctor understands, that Kind of Faith, of which none but the Regenerate are the Subjects. To the same Purpose, he says afterwards, "I profess that we are absolved, pardoned and justified, for Christ's Sake, and therefore Christ is reckoned to us, or made Righteousness to us, in order of Nature, antecedently to all those Things which for his Sake we do receive, and are made Partakers of with and by him, &c." These Quotations may be found in Dr. OWEN's Answer to Mr. BAXTER, annexed to his Answer to BIDDLE, Page 27. and 43. Whereunto agreeth what is said by the excellent Mr. BURROUGHS, in his Book of Gospel Remission, Page 25. "God pardons a Sinner, not because he is changed, but that he may be changed." He frequently asserts the same Thing in that Book of his, alledging for what he affirms, *Rom. 4. 5. Col. 2. 13. Jer. 31. 33. 34.*

It is indeed a Truth, that if by Man's Salvation we only understand his Happiness in his Communion with God, either in this Life, or in that which is to come, his Regeneration must then be considered as a Condition of, or Pre-requisite unto, his Salvation, not as a covenant Condition, but as a Thing physically necessary in order to his Happiness, as being that without which he can neither know Things spiritual, nor take any real Delight and Pleasure in them. See 1 Cor. 2. 14, 15. and Job 27. 20. *Will he Delight himself in the Almighty? Heaven itself could not give Satisfaction to an unregenerate and unholy Soul. As such cannot with Pleasure converse with God and Things spiritual here, so neither could they in Heaven, could they get thither.*

Men's Salvation does not therefore consist only in the setting such Objects before him, as are very delightful to true Saints, but also in preparing them to receive and entertain them with such Pleasure and Delight, as such Objects should be received and entertained with, and will be by the Godly. *Psal. 17. 15. As for me, I will behold thy Face in Righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy Likeness. Psal. 36. 8, 9. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the Fatness of thy House. And thou shalt make them drink of the River of thy Pleasure: For in thee is the Fountain of Life: And in thy Light shall we see Light.* Hence we read of Person's being made meet for the Inheritance of the Saints in Light, *Col. 1. 12.* and of Vessels of Mercy prepared unto Glory, *Rom. 9. 23.* This great Work is begun in Men's Rege-

neration, *John* 3. 3. and carried on in their Sanctification, wherein they are changed more and more from Glory to Glory, *2 Cor.* 3. 18. and is comprised in their Sanctification, as above.

There is one Exception, unto which what has been asserted in this Chapter, may by some be tho't liable, *viz.* That if what I here in assert were true, it would from thence follow, that our effectual Calling follows our Justification, contrary to *Rom.* 8. 30. where, according to the Apostle, it goeth before it. But I deny the Consequence. It will follow, indeed, from what I maintain, that the efficacious Grace of God, by which the Work of Regeneration is wrought in our Souls, is not in order before our Justification. If it were a Truth, that Man's effectual Calling does consist in that Act of God's Power on their Souls, by which they are regenerated, or *created anew in Christ Jesus unto good Works*, then indeed, it would follow, that our being effectually called would, according to me, follow our Justification. But I see no Reason to grant, that our effectual Calling consists in that efficacious Grace which I have now mentioned. I take effectual Calling to consist in that Work of God, by his Word and Spirit, whereby Sinners are perswaded and enabled to comply with the Terms of the new Covenant; and to accept of Jesus Christ and all his Benefits, freely offered to them in the Gospel; among which Benefits our Regeneration is one of the chief. Our Regeneration by the powerful Operation of God's holy Spirit, ought to be looked upon as an eminent Part of that Salvation, which, in our effectual Calling, we are perswaded and enabled to go to God in Christ for, and so is, in order of Nature, before our going to Jesus Christ, as we are required; and before our Justification also, as in *Rom.* 8. 30. But this our Regeneration by the efficacious Grace of God, I take not to be so.

But if (may some say) our Regeneration be not comprised in our effectual Calling, in the Text lately mentioned, where then shall our Regeneration be found in that golden Chain, in which the Method of Man's Salvation is by the Apostle expressed? What Link in that Chain may we understand to intend the glorious Work of our Regeneration? Or is not this Work taken Notice of in it? To this I answer, That it is by no Means to be allowed, that this was therein forgotten, or omitted by the inspired Apostle. Nor do I think with *Barclay*, a learned and noted *Quaker*, that this is intended by our being justified. He absurdly takes our Justification and Sanctification to be the same Thing: But I freely acknowledge that I do not at all doubt

doubt but that our Regeneration, and the progressive Work of our Sanctification, are comprised in our being glorified. Nor is this an Opinion peculiar to me, as I can shew if there be Occasion for it.

It is a great Truth in Divinity, That when God regenerateth any Person, he therein begins to glorify him; and in carrying on the Work of his Grace in regenerate Saints, he glorifieth them more and more. To this that well agreeth, 2 Cor. 3. 18. *But we all with open Face, beholding as in a Glass the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* Every regenerate Soul hath eternal Life, i. e. he already hath it, and is passed from Death unto Life; and he hath it abiding in him, as in John 5. 24. and 1 John 3. 14, 15. Such have the very same Life in them which all glorified Saints shall live in Heaven for ever: For, as Divines confess and maintain, Grace is Glory begun, and Glory is Grace made perfect. God has already given unto such the Earnest of their Inheritance, which is the same in Kind with what they shall hereafter receive in full. Herewith agreeth that, Eph. 1. 11. *In whom we have obtained an Inheritance, being predestinated according to the Purpose of him who worketh all Things after the Counsel of his own Will.* That also in Verse 13, 14. *In whom ye also trusted after that ye heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your Salvation: In whom also after ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of Promise, which is the Earnest of our Inheritance, until the Redemption of the purchased Possession, unto the Praise of his Glory.* God has already called such unto his eternal Glory, 1 Pet. 5. 10. And the Spirit of God and of Glory resteth on them, 1 Pet. 4. 14.

I would here further observe with Respect to our effectual Calling, that the good Effects thereby wrought on us, tho' not of the same Kind with those wrought in our Regeneration, yet they are the same with that Faith and Repentance which, according to my Hypothesis, is the Condition of the new Covenant. And I also suppose, that Men's Perseverance in the Exercise of such Faith and Repentance, 'till they obtain the Benefits of Justification and Regeneration, is comprised in their effectual Calling. None are effectually called without being persuaded and enabled to hold out and go on to seek the Lord 'till he hath Mercy on them, and grants his saving Benefits to them.



CHAP. VI.

The Offer of Salvation made to Sinners in the Gospel, is an Offer of bringing them into a State of Salvation; and consequently must comprise in it an Offer of regenerating Grace.

O clear up this Argument I need only say a few Things very briefly.

1. By a State of Salvation I understand such an Estate as that spoken of by our Saviour, John 5. 24. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my Word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting Life, and shall not come into Condemnation; but is passed from Death unto Life.* Such an Estate as this is also described by the Apostle, Rom. 8. 1. *There is therefore no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.* And Verse 35. and onwards, *Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ, &c.*

2. To put Men into such an Estate as this, is wholly the Work of the blessed God. It is, I say, the Work of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. (*Matth. 28. 19. 1 John 5. 7.*) God only performs this Work, and he only can promise to perform it. Never did any Man put himself into such a State. Whatever may be required of Sinners in order heretunto, yet to put them into such a State is wholly God's Work: Men themselves have no Hand in it. God only saves all that are saved, *Isai. 43. 11.* If Men are said to *save themselves*, we must only understand by it, their doing something required of them in order to God's saving them.

3. When God offers to save Sinners, he therein offers to bring, or put them, into such a State of Salvation as that but now described. When God offers to save Sinners, he therein offers to do all that for them, in which their Salvation consists, *i. e.* all that he actually does for

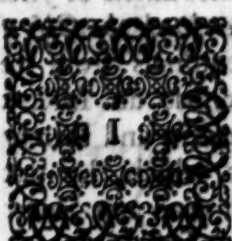
for them when he saves them. All this, I say, God offers to do for us, when he offers to save us; and to be sure, out of this we must not, we may not, leave his beginning to save us, and bringing us into a State of Salvation. It is impossible for God to save Sinners, without doing this for them, *i. e.* without translating them out of a State of Death, into a State of Life.

4. God, in thus bringing Sinners into a State of Salvation, does work in them the great Work of Regeneration, gives them a new Heart, and a new Spirit, creates them anew in Christ Jesus, unto good Works. Therefore in offering to save them, he offers to do this for them, that is, he conditionally promiseth that he will do it; which is the Point I am defending.



CHAP. VII.

There being an inseparable Connexion betwixt all spiritual Blessings, or everlasting Mercies, whenever any of these are, by GOD, offered to Sinners, all the rest are intended, and consequently, the Grace of Regeneration.

F one Person makes an Offer to another of any good Thing, which has many other good Things inseparably joined with or unto it, the Person to whom the Offer is made may well think, that he has an Offer of all those good Things made to him, tho' they are not all enumerated in the Offer. No Man would, in such a Case, imagine that he had only that one good Thing offered to him, or so many only as were expressly mentioned, but would justly conclude that all those other Goods which he was sure were firmly bound up in the same Bundle with them; so as never to be separated from them, were as really intended in the Offer, as those expressly named. Thus, if God offers any of his special saving Mercies to sinful Men, he offers every one of them; because

cause he never gives any one of them to any Person unto whom he does not give them all.

That the special Mercies or spiritual Blessings which Jesus Christ purchased for his People, are so inseparably joined together, both in the Nature of the Thing, and by the Appointment of God, as never to be separated one from another, is most evident. God never did, nor never will bestow any one of them on any Soul, on whom he does not, at the same Time, bestow them all. All that enjoy any of them may say, as in Eph. 1. 3. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual Blessings in heavenly Places (or Things) in Christ.* They are all of them Things that accompany Salvation, yea, essentially belong thereto, as in Eph. 4. 9. Therefore to whom God gives any of them, he gives them all; and to whom he offers to give any one or more of them, he offers to give them all.

Sometimes God, in a Promise mentions one of them, sometimes another, but he always intends every one of them; and sometimes he makes Use of Words which naturally comprize every one of them; as when God offers Salvation to Sinners, *Mark 16. 15, 16.* this Salvation compriseth all spiritual Blessings in it: So when God offers to have Mercy on sinful Men, *Isai. 55. 9.* this Mercy compriseth not only Pardon of Sin, there expressly mentioned, but all other spiritual Blessings, Grace and Glory and every good Thing needful, *Psal. 84. 11.*

That the Offer of Forgiveness of Sins, or of Justification, does include in it an Offer of all other spiritual Blessings, is most manifest. In the Justification of a Sinner, the meritorious Righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed or given to him: He therein receiveth the Gift of Righteousness, *Rom. 5. 17.* He receiveth Righteousness from the God of his Salvation, *Psal. 24. 5.* Now, whoever has an Interest in the perfect Righteousness of Jesus Christ, has therein and thereby an Interest in, or Right unto, all those good Things which, by that Righteousness, he purchased for Sinners: And never had any Sinner any one of these Benefits in any other Way, than by first having an Interest in the Righteousness of Christ, by whom they were all purchased for those that believe in him. Nor had ever any Sinner an Interest in this Righteousness in any other Way, than that of obtaining an Interest in Jesus Christ himself, in whom it is, and in and with whom it is bestowed, on all those who, by Faith, receive him; and all such may say, as in *Isai. 45. 24.* *In the Lord have I Righteous-*
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ness and Strength, &c. Yea, unto all such *Christ is made Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption*, 1 Cor. i. 30. Those that have him have a Righteousness, and all Things obtained thereby with him. When God gives his own Son to them, *he also with him freely gives them all Things*, Rom. 8. 32. He then gives them an Interest in his Righteousness, and in all those everlasting Mercies purchased thereby.

And as it is a Truth, that if God offers a justifying Righteousness to Sinners, he, in so doing, offers them all those Benefits that were purchased by that Righteousness; so it is no less true, that if God offers unto Sinners any of these Benefits that were obtained by Christ's Sufferings and Obedience, he therein offers them an Interest in that Righteousness, by which the same were purchased for those that believe in him. He offers not these without the Righteousness that procured them; nor that Righteousness without the Benefits procured by it.

Thus it appeareth, That whenever God offereth any of his special Mercies or spiritual Blessings unto sinful Men, he offereth all of them: And it followeth from hence, that he must needs offer the Grace of Regeneration together with the rest; nor is this excepted as implied in the Condition on which the rest are offered, as has been before sufficiently manifested in Chap. V.



C H A P. VIII.

That those exceeding great and precious Promises, by which we may be Partakers of the divine Nature, are conditional Promises of the Grace of Regeneration.

THE Promises which I here intend are those mentioned by the Apostle Peter, in his second Epistle, Chap. i. Verse 4. *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious Promises, that by these you might be Partakers of the divine Nature, having escaped the Corruption that is in the World thro' Lust.* Designing to give Instances of several con-

ditional Promises in some of the following Chapters; I intend in *this*, to endeavour to shew, from the Testimony now alledged, that we may expect to find such Promises in the Oracles of God, and have no Reason to think it strange, if several such be named and insisted on, for the Confirmation of the Hypothesis which I am defending.

The *first* Thing I shall observe in the Testimony read, is, that the Promises mentioned therein are said to be *exceeding great and precious*. And such may Promises be said to be, in several Respects, as (1) In Respect of the Matter of them, or of the Nature of the Things engaged in them. If the Things promised are great and precious, this puts a Value and Excellency upon the Promises wherein they are engaged. (2) The infallible Truth and Certainty of them is another Thing that greatly commends them, as precious and worthy to be prized, being such as may be safely depended on.

I observe *secondly*, that the Promises are said to be given by the same divine Power, by which, in Verse 3. *all Things pertaining both to Life and Godliness* are also said to be given to us: For unto this, the Word *whereby*, in the Beginning of the fourth Verse, seems evidently to refer. And this is said to be done by God and our Lord Jesus Christ, just before in Verse second. By *all Things pertaining to Life and Godliness*, in Verse third, I do not understand Life and Godliness it self, but all Things requisite to it, unto which these mentioned Promises belong; and so these Words are like those in *Isai. 5. 4. What could I have done more to my Vineyard than I have done in it.*

I observe *thirdly*, that these Pre-requisites to Life and Godliness, are said to be given us *through the Knowledge of him that hath called us to Glory and Virtue*: And this *Him* is Jesus Christ, before mentioned; and it is by revealing and making him known that Sinners have *all Things pertaining to Life and Godliness* afforded to them. Nor is there Occasion of understanding their being *called to Glory and Virtue*, of that which commonly understood by *effectual Calling*, i. e. saving Conversion; for all that *enjoy the Grace of the Gospel*, as in *2 Cor. 6. 1.* are *called to Glory and Virtue*. And by what follows in Verse 4, those here spoken to, (at least some of them) were not yet *Partakers of the divine Nature*. And tho' this Epistle was inscribed to such as had obtained like precious Faith with the Apostle Peter, and other true Saints, as appears in Verse 1. yet there is no Occasion to suppose, that all that are spoken to in it, had obtained the Faith of God's Elect; because that Kind of Faith which some of the Non-Elect

Elect and Unregenerate are the Subjects of, may be also called *exceeding precious*, in Respect of the Object of it, the glorious Truth unto which it assenteth: And all that have received the Gospel, by giving Credit to it, may be said to have obtained like *precious Faith* in Respect of its Object, with those who have obtained Faith of a much better Kind, in Respect of the Rectitude of its Acts; of which last Kind, no doubt many of those here spoken to by the Apostle, had also obtained.

That those spoken to are said to have obtained the Faith mentioned thro' the *Righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ*, is a great Truth, whether the Faith intended be of one of the Kinds mentioned, or the other; for common Grace, as well as that which is saving, is an Effect of the Merits of Christ's Righteousness. But if his Faithfulness in fulfilling his Promises may be intended by the Righteousness here spoken of Verse 1. as some suppose, this would seem to favour the Hypothesis for which I plead.

That the Apostle, in Verse 2d, wisheth *Peace from God the Father* to those unto whom he writeth, is far from necessarily supposing them to be already in a regenerate State.

I observe here *fourthly*, that the great *End* for which these precious Promises are said to be given to those that have them, is, *that by them they might be Partakers of the divine Nature*. By which *divine Nature*, our Divines generally understand the same Thing which is by me called the Grace of Regeneration. And I may here well observe, that this being the End for which these Promises are given to those unto whom the Apostle here speaks, it from hence evidently appears, that they are not by the Apostle all supposed to be in a regenerate State, notwithstanding any Thing said in the first Verse: That the Persons thus spoken to, still need the Grace of Regeneration is plain, and seems evidently supposed in the Expressions: So that all the Question is, in what Sense Sinners that are still unconverted may, by the mentioned precious Promises, be made Partakers of the divine Nature here spoken of?

I further observe *fifthly*, that the Time when those here spoken to may by the mentioned Promises be made Partakers of the divine Nature intended, is when they have *escaped the Corruption that is in the World thro' Lust*: For thus the Words run, *Having escaped, &c.* Which escaping the Corruption that is in the World, is not effected by Regeneration, but by a Work, in the Nature of it, preparatory to it; and of which Persons not savingly converted may be the Subjects,

as evidently appears in Chap. 2. Verse 20, 21, 22. of the same Epistle; where such as had *escaped the Pollutions of the World, thro' the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, are yet mentioned as finally miscarrying. Now I am not here discoursing with such as hold, that true Saints may fall from Grace. In the Words therefore under Consideration, it is plainly intimated, that God will not ordinarily, at least, make Persons Partakers of the divine Nature 'till they have first reformed their Lives, in such a Manner and Degree as Persons may before they are born again. And this is plainly intimated to us in other Texts of Scripture, as in *Prov. 1. 22, 23.* and *1 Cor. 6. 9.* as I shall afterwards more fully shew. Men have no Reason to expect, that God will pour out his Spirit upon them, to their saving Conversion, that will not repent and reform their Lives, in such a Manner as by the Help of common Grace they may. This, I say, is necessary in order to Men's being made Partakers of the divine Nature.

Now I know of but two Ways in which it can, with any Shew of Truth, be supposed, that the precious Promises mentioned can serve unto this End. One of these, is, that they are Instruments in the Hand of God for the working this great Change, call'd Regeneration; and so of communicating unto Sinners the divine Nature spoken of. The other Sense is, that God makes Sinners Partakers of this gracious Principle, in Pursuance of precious Promises, wherein he has conditionally engaged so to do. The former of these Ways some take and I dislike. The latter of them is that to which I adhere, and for which I plead. I suppose, that those who are for the first, may think there is Danger in admitting, that the divine Nature is given in Consequence of any conditional Promises made of it. I think there is none. I will first briefly shew why I agree not with those who expound these Words in the *first* of these Ways; and then shew why I am for the *latter*.

And in the *first* Place, I will give some Reasons why I think these Promises are not here considered as the Means or Instruments by which the Grace of Regeneration is wrought in Men's Souls. And (1) I suppose, that if the Design of the Holy Ghost had here been to declare what the instrumental Causes of Man's Conversion are, he would not have mentioned the Promises of God only, but would have ascribed this to the Word of God in general, as he does in other Places, where it appears that this is his Design, as in *Psal. 19. 7, 8.* *Rom. 10. 14, 17.* and *Jam. 1. 18.* The Spirit of God in men-

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tioning Promises only, gives us great Reason to think, that what he ascribes to them, is something proper to them, and not to the whole Word of God, which is instrumental in Men's Conversion, but to the Promises only, as giving a Right to the Good spoken of in the Place under Consideration. (2) There is nothing either in the Text or Context, to oblige us to think, that that which I now argue against, must necessarily be intended in the Place; but on the contrary, that which I plead for seems to be the most natural and obvious Sense of the Words, as I shall presently shew. (3) That the Instrumentality of the Promises unto Men's Conversion, or to their being *made Partakers of the divine Nature*, is not intended in the Words, I make evident by this Reason: The Promises neither are, nor can be, instrumental in the Sense here in Question, in making any Persons *Partakers of the divine Nature*. The Words must not be understood in a Sense in which they neither are nor can be true.

But now, That no Man can by the Promises, be *made a Partaker of the divine Nature*, in the Sense I oppose, I thus make manifest. Men's being *made Partakers of the divine Nature*, is the same Thing which, by Calvinists, is otherwise called *passive Conversion*; or Conversion taken in that Sense as Divines understand it, when they say the Soul is *passive* in it; and affirm it to be wrought by an immediate Act of the holy Ghost *creating us anew in Christ Jesus to good Works*, as in *Psal. 50. 10. Eph. 2. 10. and Chap. 1. 19, 20.* In Conversion thus taken, the Sinner does nothing, but God all, *Jer. 31. 18, 19. Turn thou me, and I shall be turned----- After I was turned, I repented.* In the Conversion of a Sinner, taken in this Sense, there is a Principle of Grace, or a divine Nature, put into the Soul, in the doing of which the Sinner himself has no Hand. *He has a new Heart given to him, and a new Spirit put within him, by God.* He does not this for himself, *Ezek. 36. 26.* nor is it possible that any Promises can be the Instruments of working such a Change in Men's Souls. The Change now under Consideration is not wrought by a *moral Instrument*, but by a *physical Cause*, or a *supernatural Power*; not by *moral Suasion*, but by the *mighty Power of God*. When Mankind first sinned against God, they lost all the Power they had to perform any Actions truly holy: Now when Sinners are *made Partakers of the divine Nature*, this Power is restored again in and unto them; which the Word read and preached is no Way competent to be an Instrument of; neither the Precepts, Promises, nor Threatnings of it can do this; nor can all of them together work such a Change, any more than an Argument or Syllogism can remove a Mountain. All that the Word can do, it does in a moral

moral Way, by Instructions, Convictions, and Persuasions. It does not give any Power to the Soul that it had not before, but excites and stirs Persons up to make a good Improvement of the Powers they have.

Tho' that Text, Jam. 1. 18. *Of his own Will begat he us by the Word of Truth*, seems to look another Way; yet we must know, that Regeneration, or the new Birth, may be taken more largely, as it compriseth Men's active Conversion in it, or as intending their passive Conversion only. In the former Sense, Conversion is ascribed to the Word of God read and preached; but in the latter Sense it is not, neither indeed can be. The Ministry of the Word does ordinarily accompany Conversion, but never works the Change: It does much in the Work preparatory to it, and in exciting to the Acts and Exercise of Grace, when once given; but it does nothing towards the infusing of the Principle. The preaching of the Word is not that by which we are created anew unto good Works: It is another Kind of Word that does this, even such a Kind of Power as that, Gen. 1. 3. *God said, Let there be Light, and there was Light*, as appears by comparing that Place with 2 Cor. 4. 6. *God who hath commanded the Light to shine out of Darkness, hath shined into our Hearts, to give us the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God, in the Face of Jesus Christ.* This God does by giving the divine Nature to us, as in the Text under Consideration. Thus I have shewn why I think the divine Nature is not communicated by the Promises, as instrumental efficient Causes of it.

I shall now proceed to shew positively, why I conceive, that by these Promises we are made Partakers of the divine Nature, as it is pursuant to them, that God communicates the same unto us; or as it is by them we have a Right to it: And to confirm this, I say, (1) This seems to be the most natural and genuine Sense of the Expressions used in the Text here insisted on. When Persons are said to be made Partakers of any Mercy, by Promise, who would once imagine, that this meant, that the Promise intended was the efficient Cause in the Communication, or Conveyance of the Good said to be given by it? And not rather, that it was by Promise as that gave a Right to it. See Gal. 3. 18. *If the Inheritance be of the Law, it is no more of Promise; but God gave it to Abraham by Promise.* (2) Another Reason of this is, because it is certain, that there are a great many such exceeding great and precious Promises given, for the End here intended, viz. That, by Virtue of them, the Persons to whom they are given, might be Partakers of the divine Nature; the same being conditionally offered

offered in them. If no such conditional Promises could be found in Scripture, as these I speak of, it would not then be easy to declare what Promises are intended in the Place under Consideration, supposing their Instrumentality to Conversion were what is therein designed. But if there are many conditional Promises of Regeneration found in Scripture, then we have good Reason to suppose, that the Way in which Sinners are by these made Partakers of the divine Nature, is by entitling them to it, on their Fulfilment of the Condition on which it is offered.

Now, That there are many such Promises, I will shew in the Sequel of this Discourse, by instancing in divers of them; and so shall here suppose this to be a Truth.

But I suppose it will by some be here said, That tho' it be denied, that there are any such conditional Promises as I plead for; yet inasmuch as there are absolute Promises of the Grace of Regeneration, (by some called the first Grace) these may be the Promises intended in the Text insisted on; and in Consequence of which the Grace of a new Heart may be given, without Men's Performance of any Condition, by which they may be entitled to the Good of these Promises: And Ezek. 11. 19, 20. and Chap. 36. 26. are commonly instanced in, as containing such Promises. Unto this, several Things may be said, as,

First, It may be doubted whether these called *absolute Promises*, are indeed any Promises at all. Some learned Men seem to think they are not; but rather Prophecies of the Mercies mentioned in them. I think Mr. BAXTER was of this Opinion. It seems essential to a Promise of good Things, that the Person or Persons, to whom it is made, be some Way or other described or indigitated in it. Now, these, here called Promises, do not this. No one Person can truly affirm, that these Promises are made to him. If they be Promises *Judicial* might have laid as good a Claim to them as *Peter*. If God converts a Sinner, he does not therein fulfil any such Promise to him: If he does, then was he obliged by Promise to do it; which, how can any make manifest. If God should not convert and save any Sinner in the World, none could say, that God has not kept his Word with him: Unless, with me, conditional Promises of converting Grace be acknowledged. If there be any Thing at all of the Nature of a Promise, in such Declarations of God's Intention to convert and save some of the Children of Men, all Mankind have an equal Right to it, by Virtue of what is therein engaged, tho' God may, in his secret Purpose, intend the Good promised to certain definitive Persons, and not to any other.

Secondly,

Secondly, If these are allowed to be properly Promises; yet some think they are not Promises properly made to any of the sinful Children of Men, but to Jesus Christ himself, in the Covenant of Redemption, agreed on betwixt his Father and him; of which we have an Account in the holy Scriptures, *Psal.* 39. 3. *Isai.* 53. 10, 11, 12. and elsewhere. Of this Judgment was our very judicious and learned Mr. WILLARD, as appears in his Treatise of that Covenant, Page 118. Thus these Promises are not made to Sinners at all, nor given to us, as in the Text under Consideration.

Thirdly, If these be allowed to be Promises, and to be made to the sinful Children of Men, I desire to know how it appears, that there is no Condition required of them in order to their being Partakers of the Good promised.---The Contrary seems plainly to appear, with Respect to that in *Ezek.* 36. 26. For tho' a Condition be not expressed in the same Verse or Sentence; yet there seems to be one plainly required, a little after, in Verse 37. *Yet for this will I be required of by the House of Israel to do it for them.* By which Words, I think, all other Promises of the like Nature may be explained. God does, therein, as good as tell those, unto whom such Promises are made, that they may not expect this Mercy without seeking to him for it; and doubtless those that expect it in any other Way will find themselves mistaken. What tho' God does not always express the Condition of a Promise, in every Place where the Promise it self, and the Good promised, is expressed; yet if, in other Places, the Condition be expressed, as well as the Good he promiseth, this is sufficient to let us know, that the Promise is every where to be understood as made on that Condition; at least, that Men may not expect the Good of such Promises, without the Performance of the Condition required in order to it. And I shall still have Occasion to shew, that there are many Places of Scripture where Promises of the same Mercy are conditionally proposed to Sinners.

And suppose I should find, in the Bible, several Places where Pardon of Sin is promised, without expressly naming the Condition on which that Promise is made, might I from thence infer, that it is a Benefit that is not conditionally offered? If this would do, we may find such Places, as in *Isai.* 43. 22. *Jer.* 31. 34. and Chap. 33. 8. so in *Micah* 7. 18. May we infer from hence, that Pardon of Sin is not conditionally offered? Surely I think not.

CHAP.



CHAP. IX.

That the conditional Promises, made in Scripture, that such as seek God and his special Favour, shall find him, do contain or imply in them, an Offer of the Grace of Regeneration.

SHALL, for the clearing up of what is here asserted, endeavour to shew, (1) That there are in Scripture conditional Promises made, that such as seek God and his special Favour, shall find him and that. (2) That these Promises contain and imply in them, an Offer of the Grace of Regeneration.

To make good the first of these, I shall (1) instance in several such Promises as I here intend. (2) Make some Observations on them.

1. The Promises I here intend are such as these which follow, 1 Chron. 28. 9. ---If thou seek him, he will be found of thee. 2 Chron. 15. 2. ---The Lord is with you while ye be with him; if ye seek him, he will be found of you; if ye forsake him, he will forsake you. Prov. 8. 17. Those that seek me early shall find me. Jer. 29. 13. Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your Heart. Amos 5. 4. Thus saith the Lord unto the House of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live. Matth. 7. 7,---11. Ask, and it shall be given to you: Seek, and ye shall find: Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth: And he that seeketh, findeth: And to him that knocketh, it shall be opened. Or what Man is there of you, whom, if his Son ask Bread, will give him a Stone? Or if he ask a Fish, will give him a Serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good Gifts to your Children, how much more will your Father which is in Heaven, give good Things to them that ask him. We have the same Words, in effect, Luke 11. 9,---13. With these Texts agreeth Isai. 45. 19. I said

I said not unto the House of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain. Also Isai. 55. 6. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found---

2. I shall make some Observations on the Promises. And here, I say,

(1) Tho' the Words, in some of the Places mentioned, are not express'd in the Form of Promises; yet Promises are plainly supposed or implied in them; as in that *Isai. 45. 19. and 55. 6.*

(2) These Promises are *conditional*. A Condition is plainly express'd in most of them, and implied in them all: And the Condition required is, *seeking God*: And is otherwise called, *asking, knocking, &c.*

(3) Such conditional Promises are made to unregenerate Persons, to encourage them to seek the Lord for his special Mercies or spiritual Blessings. I do not say, they are not made to the Regenerate also, to encourage them to seek for more Grace; but I think the first and principal Design of them, is, to encourage such as are in a State of Sin and Death, to seek to God for his saving Mercies; such as Pardon of Sin, a new Heart, and a new Spirit. This is, at least, one Design of them.

(4) Those Promises quoted out of the old Testament, as well as those out of the New, are Promises of spiritual Blessings or everlasting Mercies, and ought not to be understood of temporal Blessings only, see *Psal. 103. 17, 18.*

(5) When unregenerate Persons are called upon and encouraged to seek God, with a Promise that they shall find him, and obtain Mercy from him, the seeking intended does not comprise the exercising of true Grace and Holiness in it: It is impossible it should do this: Because this is that, which they being without, are encouraged to seek after. God does not say unto an unregenerate Soul, "Seek to me" for the Grace of Regeneration, in the Exercise of that same Grace, "and then I will bestow it upon thee." It is a Dishonour to God so to expound such Promises. Therefore tho' it be true, as in the last foregoing Particular, that it is not any Kind of seeking that will answer this End, but a seeking after a due and suitable Manner, i. e. seeking with Faith, in Hope, under an humble Sense of Unworthiness, with great Earnestness and Perseverance, &c. yet this Grace to be exercised in seeking the Grace of a new Heart and a new Spirit, cannot be such Faith, Hope and Humility, &c. as is peculiar to such as are already born of God, and become new Creatures; but such as may be called *common Grace*; inasmuch as such may have it, as are not yet passed from Death to Life; or as have not eternal Life abiding in them, as in *John 5. 24.* compared with *1 John 3. 14, 15.* This

seems

seems to be so evident, that I wonder that all Men do not yield to it, as I know of some that do.

Having now considered the Nature of the Promises alledged in this Chapter, for the Confirmation of my Hypothesis, I shall proceed to shew, *Secondly*, That an Offer of the Grace of Regeneration is implied in them. I have proved that they contain and comprise conditional Promises of our finding God, and obtaining his special Favour; and I must confess I am extremely mistaken, if this does not include and imply in it our obtaining the regenerating and saving Influences of his holy Spirit. Does not our obtaining Mercy at God's Hands, as well imply in it his changing our Hearts, and endowing us with his holy Spirit, or making us Partakers of the divine Nature, as his pardoning our Sins, and justifying of us? Finding God, surely signifies, finding Favour in his Sight; and this certainly implies in it, our receiving from him all those spiritual Blessings which he bestows on all those to whom he extends his special Favour.



CHAP. X.

That those conditional Promises of the Holy Spirit, which we have in the Oracles of God, include and imply in them Offers of converting Grace.

THE Promises which I here intend are such as these following. Prov. 1. 23. Turn you at my Reproof: Behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my Words unto you. Luke 11. 13. If ye, bring evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him. Acts 2. 38. Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ, for the Remission of Sins, and ye shall receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost.

That these are Promises, and that they are conditional, seems too evident to be denied. A Precept with a Promise annexed to en-

courage the Performance of the Duty required, must, I think, be looked upon as a conditional Promise. Such are these in each of the Places mentioned, as by the bare reading of them appears.

That these Promises are made to unregenerate Persons cannot, I think, be reasonably denied. That in *Prov.* 1. 23. is made to such Persons as are described in Verse 22. who are there thus called on, *How long, ye simple Ones, will ye love Simplicity? And the Scorners delight in scorning.* And it follows in Verse 23. *Turn ye, &c.* In *Luke* 11. 13. the Persons spoken to are directed how they may obtain the Gift of God's Spirit, which supposeth that they are, or may be, without it; and those who are so, may, I think, well take the Words as spoken to them, or concerning them. The Words in *Acts* 2. 38. were spoken to very heinous Sinners, who were then closely dealt with, for having a Hand in the crucifying the Lord Jesus, and who being *pricked in the Heart*, under a deep Sense of their Sin and Guilt, asked that Question in Verse 37. *What shall we do?* And the Answer given them did not import that they were in a State of Grace, but the contrary. They were, many of them at least, in an unconverted State.

These Things being briefly observed, I shall more distinctly consider two Things, *viz.* (1) What the Benefit is, here conditionally promised to these. (2) On what Condition it is promised.

1. Let us consider what the Benefit is which, in the Places under Consideration, is conditionally promised to such Sinners as these: And, that we may judge aright of this, we shall consider how the same is described in each of the mentioned Places.

I shall begin with that in *Prov.* 1. 23. And here the Good promised is thus described; *I will pour out my Spirit unto you.* Whether by God's Spirit here, we are to understand the Person of the Holy Ghost, or those Gifts and Graces of which he is the Author and Bestower, need not be earnestly disputed. If the *former*, then the Spirit is here spoken of as poured on Men to work his saving Graces in them, which is as much as I desire. If the *second*, that is what I plead for in this Essay. If *both*, this still comes fully up to my Purpose, *viz.* That the Grace of Regeneration is conditionally offered or promised to Sinners in the Covenant of Grace.

In which of these Ways soever this Promise is understood, saving Illumination and Instruction is certainly intended in the Promise made,

made, when God tells those that he speaks to, that he will make known his Words to them. This will be evident by comparing these Words with others like them: Such as we may find in *Prov.* 2. 5, and *Psal.* 119. 18, 19. *John* 17. 6, 7, 8. The pouring out of God's Spirit to sinful Men, certainly intends saving Illumination and Conversion.

In that Place, *Luke* 11. 13. the Thing promised, is *the Gift of the Holy Spirit* to those that perform the Condition to that End required of them. Now by this Holy Spirit we must understand, either the Person of the Holy Ghost, whom God sends into the Hearts of his chosen Ones, to regenerate, sanctify and influence them, and dwell in them, as his Temple for ever, of which the Scriptures speak plentifully; or that Principle of saving Grace and Holiness, which he works in, or bestows upon, sinful Men in their Regeneration; which is also called by the Name of the *Spirit of God*, *Gal.* 5. 17. and *Ezek.* 36. 26. and elsewhere: Either of these will serve my Turn.

In *Acts* 2. 38. the Good conditionally promised to the Sinners there spoken to, is the *Remission of Sin*, and *the Gift of the Holy Ghost*: In the last of which the Grace of Regeneration is certainly implied, as well as in the other Promises which I have already spoken to. These are Things which God has, in the Promise, joined together; and no Man ought to go about to separate them. What is intended by Salvation, *Mark* 16. 16. and in this Chap. Verse 22. is here called *Remission of Sin*, is the same with that Believing, which is required in the but now mentioned Text in *Mark*. As for that extraordinary Effusion of the Holy Ghost, spoken of in the former Part of this Chapter, there are many who repent and are baptized, who yet never obtain it. But the Spirit in its saving Operations, all who repent, and obtain Remission of Sins do receive. And these Benefits true Penitents are made Partakers of in the order in which they are here mentioned, as I have already abundantly proved; *first* Pardon of Sin, and *then* the Grace of Regeneration immediately thereon.

2. We must consider what the Condition is on which this Benefit is, or rather these Benefits are offered.

And,

(1) In *Prov.* 1. 23. the Duty or Condition required is *Turning at God's Reproof*, by which we may not understand such a Turning from Sin unto God as does pre-suppose the Gift of the Holy Spirit, in his regenerating

regenerating Influences; for the Gift of the Holy Spirit, understood in this Sense, evidently followeth the Turning here intended, as appears in the Text; so that the Turning here required, is an Act in which the mentioned Benefit is promised.

We must know, therefore, that there is a *Turning at God's Reproof*, which is preparatory to Regeneration, and, in Order of Nature, before God's pouring out his Spirit unto us, and making known his Words unto us, in that special Sense, in which these Words are here used; and unto which the Influences of the Holy Spirit, with which some Sinners are favoured before they are savingly converted, are sufficient. It is evident in Scripture, that Sinners enjoying the Ministry of God's Word, (here, as I think, called his Reproof) accompanied with the Strivings of his Spirit, may have a Work of Conversion wrought in them, of a lower Kind than that which we call by the Name of *Regeneration*; and yet such as to denominate them Believers, Penitents, Saints and Righteous; inasmuch that some who were never regenerated by the Spirit of God, are in Scripture said to have escaped the Pollutions of the World, thro' the Knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. If what I have here said be called in Question, as I think it will not, I hope I shall be able, if I live, to make it good: At present I shall content my self to refer my Reader to some of the Texts by which this Truth is sufficiently confirmed: Such as *Math. 13. 20, 21. Luke 8. 13. Math. 12. 41. and Chap. 11. 21. Ezech. 18. 24, 26. 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21.* I may add, that Sinners not yet savingly converted may be so far turned as to cry earnestly to God for converting Grace, as in *Jer. 31. 18. and Prov. 2. 3, 4.*

Thus much being said, it is easy to conceive how Persons not yet endowed with the Holy Spirit, in the Sense that the Regenerate are, may yet be such as ask him, or pray to God to bestow him on them, as in *Luke 11. 13.* The Condition there required in order to Person's having God's Spirit poured out to them,

In the other Text mentioned, *Acts 2. 38.* the Condition required, is, *repenting* and being baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ. By the former of these we must understand such a Kind of Repentance as I have already described in the last Paragraph, viz. a Kind of Repentance going before, and being, in the Nature of it, preparatory to Regeneration; because, according to the Text, Men's having Remission of Sin and the Gift of the Holy Ghost, follows after it. Indeed when Sinners, being pricked in their Hearts, cry out, *What*

shall

shall we do, as in Verse 37. and, *What shall I do to be saved*, as in *Act* 16. 30. their Enquiry is not only after Pardon; but after a new Heart and a new Spirit also. Such are therefore fitly here told how they may obtain the Gift of the Holy Ghost, as well as the Pardon of their Sins. Note, that by Repentance, here, the same Thing is intended as is meant by Believing, *Mark* 16. 16.

What is implied in Men's being baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ; and how this is required as a Condition of their receiving the Gift of the Holy Ghost, must be here briefly considered; for it seems plainly to be so required in the Words under Consideration.

I then conceive that Baptism here, is not to be considered as a mere Washing with Water, in the Name of Jesus Christ, nor indeed ever should be so, but as a Seal and Token of the new Covenant, as Circumcision, according to the Nature of the Institution, also was, *Gen.* 17. 11. *Rom.* 4. 11. So that to be circumcised of old was, and to be baptized now is, the same Thing in other Words, as to be taken visibly into Covenant with God. Respecting Circumcision it is plain that he that was circumcised was thereby bound and obliged to the Observance of the whole Law, *Gal.* 5. 3. Where by the Law, I do not understand the Covenant of Works, but the Covenant of Grace, according to that Dispensation of it which, under the old Testament, was to be observed; for according to that Law the Jews were governed, and not according to the Tenor of the Covenant of Works; if they had, they could not have been saved. It is also evident, that he that is baptized in, or into, the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is thereby brought under an Obligation to perform all the Duties required in the Gospel, or under the new Testament. And, by the Way, Infants are as capable of being brought under such covenant Obligations now under the Gospel, as they were under the Law. And as for the Adult, when they are baptized, they are bound by their own Act and Deed, to perform all the Duties required in the new Testament. And hence it seemeth to follow, that to be baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ, or in the Name of all the Persons in the Holy Trinity, is the same Thing as to be initiated into the new covenant State, and laid under a federal Obligation to perform all the Duties of it.

Now this being duly considered, we may the more easily understand why, and in what Sense Baptism is required, as a Condition of the new Covenant, or our Willingness to take upon us an Obligation to the Duties of it, or to take the Yoke of Jesus Christ upon us:
And

regenerating Influences; for the Gift of the Holy Spirit, understood in this Sense, evidently followeth the Turning here intended, as appears in the Text; so that the Turning here required, is an Act in which the mentioned Benefit is promised.

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And

And he that refuseth to be baptized, does in Effect therein say, That he will not have the Man, Jesus Christ, to reign over him, as in Luke 19. 14. Such therefore, as refuse to be baptized, are said to resist the Counsel of God against themselves, Luke 7. 30. 'Tis therefore no Wonder, that this is required as ordinarily necessary to Salvation, as in Mark 16. 16. and as necessary to our obtaining Remission of Sin, and the Gift of the holy Ghost, here in Acts 2. 38.

Here, by the Way, I cannot forbear observing, how greatly they are mistaken, who think that Baptism is, according to Christ's Institution, to follow after Regeneration and the Remission of Sins, when in truth it is to be received or submitted to, in order to our obtaining these Mercies, as in the Text I am considering. Tho' the same Kind of Faith and Repentance be necessary in order to it, as I have shewed; yet not that which is peculiar to the Regenerate.



CHAP. XI.

That the Offers made to Sinners, of the Water of Life, in the Gospel, are Offers of the saving Graces of the holy Spirit.

***** H A T there are in the holy Scriptures most gracious Offers of the Water of Life, is very certain. *****
***** T H A T Such an Offer is that in Isai. 55. 1. *Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters.*----- Such also is that in John 7. 37. *Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any Man thirst, let him come to me and drink.* Such an Offer there also is in Rev. 22. 17. *The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that is athirst come: And whosoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely.* Such an Offer is also implied in John 4. 10. *Jesus said unto her, If thou knewest the Gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked him, and he would have given thee living Water.*

Now, all that is here necessary to my present Purpose, is to shew, that an Offer of the *Water of Life*, or of this *living Water*, does certainly contain or imply in it, an Offer of the Grace of Regeneration. And to make this evident, I shall (1) endeavour to prove, that the

Grace

Grace of Regeneration, or a Principle of saving Grace and Holiness, is the very Thing intended by the Water of Life, in Scripture: But if that may not be admitted, then (2) it must be implied and comprehended in that which otherwise is intended by it.

First, I will endeavour to shew, that by the *Water of Life*, the Grace of Regeneration is in Scripture intended: And this I will endeavour to make evident, by comparing some of the Places of Scripture that speak of it. In *John* 4. 10. our Lord having spoken of this Water, in such Language as plainly implieth an Offer of it, and his Readiness to give it to such as ask it of him, he after some further Discourse with the Woman of Samaria, gives her this further Account of the Advantages which such have by it, as receive it of him. Verse 14. *Whoever drinketh of the Water that I shall give him, shall never thirst: But the Water that I shall give him, shall be in him a Well of Water springing up to everlasting Life.* In which Words of our Lord he plainly intimates, that this Water is something, which the Persons partaking of it, have within them, as a living Principle of Life and Motion; by which Principle of Life, what can we so well understand as that divine Nature given to Men in their Regeneration? Of which we read *Ezek.* 37. 14. *Eph.* 2. 2. *2 Pet.* 2. 4. Or, if not this, the Spirit himself, who is the Author, Bestower and Preserver of this divine Principle? Which of these is to me equal, and comes to the same Thing.

Again, our Saviour, in *John* 7. 37. having invited thirsty Sinners to come to him, and drink, (of the Water of Life, no doubt) he adds in Verse 38. *He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his Belly shall flow Rivers of living Water:* By which Water, that we might understand what he intended, the Evangelist immediately subjoins these Words, in Verse 39. *This he spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.* Now, what can this possibly intend, if by it be not meant either the Person of the Holy Spirit, or that divine Principle which he is the Author of, in Men's Souls, as before.

The Belly, out of which these Waters are said to flow, may be understood to mean the inward Parts, or Heart, as by comparing *John* 15. 35. with *Psal.* 51. 6. does appear. And what we may understand by this Waters flowing from thence, we may gather from *Luke* 6. 45. *A good Man out of the good Treasure of his Heart, bringeth forth that which is good; with which agreeth that in Psal. 40. 8. I delight to do thy Will, O God: Yea, thy Law is within my Heart.*

The Scriptures of the old Testament, to which these Words of our Saviour, may, I think, be supposed to refer, may be such as we have in *Isai.* 44. 3. 4. 5. and Chap. 49. 10. and 58. 11. the last of which Texts I shall only here transcribe, as agreeing well with this Place and that before mentioned, *John* 4. 14. *The Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy Soul in Drought, and make fat thy Bones: And thou shalt be like a watered Garden, and like a Spring of Water, whose Waters fail not.*

There is one Exception to which, what I here plead for, may seem liable, viz. That the Evangelist says, that our Lord here spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: For the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified: By which it seems as if our Lord here intended those extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Spirit given at *Pentecost*, after his Ascension, *Acts* 2. beginning, according to that Prophecy in *Joel* 2. 28, 29.

Now to this I answer, That tho' there be no Doubt but that our Lord had a Respect to the mentioned extraordinary Gifts; yet to restrain his Meaning to these only, without taking into what he intended, the giving of the Holy Ghost, for the Conversion of great Numbers of Souls about that Time, is, I think, altogether without Warrant. I know of no Expositors that so restrain the Sense of that Prophecy in *Joel*, to those extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit mentioned, or to any other in the Days of Christ and his Apostles, or at any other Time afterwards, as not to include those that are common to all Believers: And our Saviour warrants our expounding it in this Manner, by speaking of his giving the Spirit, as the Privilege of Believers in general, without any Exception, in the Place discoursed on, and elsewhere, as in *Rom.* 8. 9. and *Acts* 2. 38, 39.

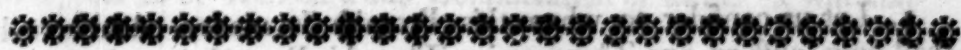
If it be said, that none can believe in Christ, 'till the Spirit of God in his saving Influences be given to them; And therefore, the Grace given in Men's first Conversion cannot be given to them by Promise; I shall, besides what has been already said to this, hereafter take this Objection under Consideration.

If what I have now said be not thought sufficient, to prove the Water of Life offered to Sinners, to be the same Thing with the Holy Spirit given in Regeneration, as I think it is, then I here further say,

Secondly, That supposing Jesus Christ himself, as some think, be intended by that admirable Water, the Gift of this Water will suppose and imply, the Gift of the Grace of Regeneration; and so an

Offer

Offer of Jesus Christ will imply an Offer of that. As Jesus Christ is sometimes called *the Bread of Life*; so if it be allowed that he is here called the Water of Life also, an Offer of the Grace of Regeneration will be still implied in an Offer of Him. Those who come unto him are said to come as to a *living Fountain*, 1 Pet. 2. 4. And he may be understood to be intended by that *Fountain opened*, Zach. 13. 1. If it then be supposed, that Jesus Christ himself is the Water of Life here intended, the offering of this Water to Sinners, is an offering of him to them. But then Jesus Christ thus offered unto sinful Men, is offered with all his Fulness to them, even all that Fulness of which we read Col. 1. 18, 19, and John 1. 14, 16. and if so, then to be sure not without his Spirit and Grace in and with him *, which is the Point for which I, in this Essay, am obliged earnestly to contend.



C H A P. XII.

Those conditional Offers of spiritual Wisdom made to Sinners in the Word of God, are Offers of a Principle of saving Grace or Holiness.

IN Pursuance of what I design in this Chapter, I must shew, that there are such Promises as I here speak of; and then prove, that these Promises contain or imply in them a conditional Offer of a Principle of saving Grace or Holiness. And I shall endeavour to make this good in both the Parts of it, with Respect to two Promises, or rather one and the same, expressed in two Texts of Scripture; one of which we have in the *old Testament*, the other in the *new*.

I shall begin with that in the *old Testament*, which we have in Prov. 2. beginning. That we may at once see it with the Condition on which it is made, with a Reason given for the certain Fulfilment of it, I shall transcribe the Words from the first to the sixth Verse,

• See Part II. Chap. IV.

My Son, if thou wilt receive my Words, and hide my Commandments with thee; so that thou incline thine Ear unto Wisdom, and apply thine Heart to Understanding: Yea, if thou criest after Knowledge, and liftest up thy Voice for Understanding: If thou seekest her as Silver, and searchest for her, as for hid Treasures: Then shalt thou understand the Fear of the Lord; and find the Knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth Wisdom: Out of his Mouth cometh Knowledge and Understanding.

It cannot be denied, that these Words run in the Form of a conditional Promise: My Son, if thou wilt do thus and thus, then shalt thou, &c. And, in order to our rightly understanding the Text, we must consider, (1) to whom this Promise is made, (2) on what Conditions, (3) what is the Good promised, (4) the Reason given for the Confirmation of the Truth of the Promise.

1. Let us consider to whom this Promise is made. And here I shall only insist on one Thing, viz. That this Promise is undoubtedly made to Persons in an unregenerate State, as well as unto such as are regenerate or born again. It is evident that it is the Scope and Design of the Place, to direct Persons how they may get true Wisdom, that which is of the best Kind; And indeed this is the Scope of the whole Book of Proverbs, as appears Chap. 1. Verse 2,--7. Now, to imagine, that such Directions are, by the wise Man, and by God himself speaking by him, given only to those who are already truly and spiritually wise, is what there is not the least Colour for. I deny not that the truly wise are here directed how they may get more Wisdom of the same Kind; but I affirm, that this cannot be the only, or indeed the principal, Intendment of the Place: But such as are still destitute of the Wisdom intended, are here directed how they may obtain it; and are encouraged to seek after it. Nor is that Compellation, *My Son*, any Way inconsistent with what I here say, if we consider how it is frequently used in this Book, and elsewhere in Scripture.

2. We may consider on what Condition this Promise is made. And there are here several Things required of the Persons to whom it is conditionally propos'd. And here, before I instance in the Things required, I must observe in general with Respect to them, that none of them have, nor in Reason can have, any Thing in them that does imply, that the Persons to perform them must, in order to it, be endowed with true spiritual Wisdom, such as they are directed and encouraged to seek after; or that they are such as cannot be performed

'till

'till the same Kind of Wisdom be first obtained. The Reason of this is obvious. Every Thing here required, is required of such as have not the Kind of Wisdom intended, and this in order to their getting of it. Now, what can be more absurd than to imagine, that the wise and inspired *Solomon* did, in the Name of God, advise Persons destitute of a certain Sort or Kind of Wisdom, to labour to obtain the same, by performing certain Conditions, to the Performing of which their first having the same Kind of Wisdom was absolutely necessary? This would be no less unreasonable, than to advise a blind Man to make Use of good Eye-sight in searching after Medicines to cure him of his Blindness. The Thing therefore required of unregenerate Persons, in order to their obtaining the Wisdom here intended, cannot be such as cannot be done 'till they are first endowed with that Kind of Wisdom which they are called upon to seek for: Nor will they appear to be such on a due Consideration of them. I will consider them severally.

The first Thing required is the receiving of the Words of him who speaketh them. *If thou wilt receive my Words*, i. e. the Words of *Solomon*, or any other true Minister's speaking in God's Name: Or if we say the Word of God himself, it is the same Thing. This does not necessarily intend a receiving the Word of God in such a Manner as none but the regenerate receive it. It may be such a receiving of it as that intended, *Matth.* 13. 20, 21. Nay, I say, it must be such a receiving the Word as this; for this receiving it, as it respects many of those who are spoken to, is only in order to their obtaining saving Wisdom, they being still without it.

The next Thing required as the Condition of such Persons obtaining true Wisdom, is their *hiding God's Commandments with them*; and this may be done by Persons not yet regenerate, as by some awakened Sinner made sensible of his Sin and Guilt, and desirous to know what he shall do to be saved. Is it not possible for such an one to hear the Word of God with some Concern of Soul: Yea, to buy a Bible, and keep it by him, for his Instruction in the Way of Life; and frequently meditate on what he reads, and mark such Places in it as he thinks best suits his Case, committing others to Memory, with a Design not to forget them, but observe and practice them? Or may we tell any one that does so, that he is in a regenerate State?

The

The next Thing required of such is, that they *incline their Ears to Wisdom, and apply their Hearts to Understanding*, i. e. give themselves to the Study of them, with some Affection and Delight. So Mr. POOL on the Place. But then, I say, this Affection and Delight required, in order to their getting spiritual Wisdom, must be such as that mentioned in *Matth. 13. 20.* because the Persons here spoken to, as those there mentioned, have no Root of saving Grace in them, as was before declared. To *apply the Heart to Wisdom*, may be as well understood of the Application of the Mind and Soul to the Study and Pursuit of it, as to the actual Acquisition, or Exercise of it.

It is further required, in order to such Persons obtaining of Wisdom, that they *cry after Knowledge, and lift up their Voice for Understanding*: That is, that they pray earnestly to God for it, as in *Jam. 1. 5.* Now is it not possible for any unregenerate Person thus to do? If it be not, many others besides my self, are mistaken with Respect to *Ephraim*, when he prays, *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned*, *Jer. 31. 18.* We frequently exhort and press unregenerate Sinners to pray for the Grace of Regeneration, and consequently for spiritual Wisdom, which consists in the Fear of the Lord, *Job 28. 28.* Now I would know whether we ought withal to tell them, that it is impossible that they should do thus 'till after they have the Wisdom which, being without, we advise them to seek after. That it is not in their Power to change their own Hearts, I readily acknowledge; but that they are unable with God's Assistance to Pray to him to do this for them, and this with great Earnestness, I see no Reason at present to grant.

Another Duty or Condition required of unregenerate Sinners, in order to their getting this spiritual Wisdom, is their *seeking it as Silver, and searching for it as for hid Treasures*: By which I think we may well understand, their industriously attending all proper Means in order to their obtaining of it. Now I would know whether it be impossible for any unregenerate Person, under the deepest Conviction of Sin, Righteousness, and Judgment, that such are capable of, to do this? Is it absolutely impossible for People, 'till after they are savingly converted, and become wise to Salvation, and so passed from Death to Life, to *strive to enter in at the strait Gate*, (as they are exhorted to do, *Luke 13. 24.*) or to *press into (or towards) the Kingdom of God*, (as in *Luke 16. 16.*) 'till after they are actually in it? And do not Men begin to *work out their own Salvation*, 'till after they are in a State of Salvation, and have actually obtained eternal Life? I cannot think our doing thus is the Work only of one Moment; but includes in it

our watching at Wisdom's Gates, and waiting at the Posts of her Doors, (Prov. 8. 34.) in order to our being made wise to Salvation, and not only after we are so : And it may be compared with the poor Cripples waiting at the Pool of Bethesda, John 5. 2, 3. Can we truly affirm, that unregenerate Sinners neither can, nor ever do, thus wait on God in the Use of Means for the converting Influences of his Spirit ? Or for the Bestowment of true spiritual Wisdom on them ? Yea, let me ask whether there have never been any unconverted Sinners that would rather have parted with all the Substance of their Houses, than fail of true Conversion, and so of eternal Happiness ? Yea, I would yet farther enquire, whether it is impossible for any unconverted Sinner to do otherwise than that young Man did, who would not part with his outward Estate, tho' his Soul lay at Stake ? Matth. 19. 22. For my part, I doubt not but that an unregenerate Sinner may resist unto Blood fighting against Sin. Compare Heb. 4. 12. with 1 Cor. 13. 3. Men's doing all that I have spoken of, will not prove them to be already wise to Salvation : And yet I do not believe that any that persevere in such a Course as this, shall fail of the Grace of God, and finally perish.

Now this brings me to the Promise made in the Place under Consideration, to those that perform the Conditions thus required : And this we have in Verse 5. *Then shalt thou understand the Fear of the Lord ; and find the Knowledge of God.* The Promise is very express and peremptory ; and I believe there are scarce any but what believe, that all who obtain the Good here promised, are made wise to Salvation ; not only brought nigh to the Kingdom of God, but actually into it. Those who think that such Seekers are so, who are described in the foregoing Verses, will doubtless acknowledge, that they must needs be so, unto whom the Promise made in Verse 5 is fulfilled. The Words of the Promise here made, do certainly signify the saving Illumination and Instruction of those happy Souls that partake of the Good expressed in it. None can doubt of this that will be at the Trouble to compare this Promise with what we have in Psal. 25. 14. and 51. 6. and 19. 18, 19. 1 John 2. 27. John 17. 8. Prov. 3. 13. and Chap. 2. 10, 11. Such as are wise to Salvation know the Wisdom here intended to be that mentioned Job 28. 28. and Psal. 111. 10.

We have in the Place under Consideration a Reason given to confirm to us the Truth of the Promise made, Verse 6. *For the Lord giveth Wisdom : Out of his Mouth cometh Knowledge and Understanding,*
i. e.

i. e. he that thus promiseth to bestow spiritual Wisdom on such as come up to the Terms on which it is offered, is the Lord Jehovah, who is the only and all-sufficient Giver of that Wisdom, by which Men are made wise to Salvation; he being the *Father of Lights*, from whom every good and perfect Gift cometh down, Jam. 1. 17. Therefore we may assuredly depend on him for the Good thus promised, if we take the Course which he directeth us to for the obtaining of it.

I may now proceed to the other Testimony I intended, for the Confirmation of what I have asserted; and that is in the new Testament, Jam. 1. 5. *If any of you lack Wisdom, let him ask it of God, that giveth to all Men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given to him.*

This Text is very much like that last produced and vindicated; and therefore I shall need say the less upon it. The first Thing that I shall say on it is, that the Thing promised in it is *Wisdom*; and this doubtless the same Kind of Wisdom as that described by the same Apostle, Chap. 3. Verse 17. *The Wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of Mercy, and good Fruits, without Partiality and without Hypocrisy.* By which Wisdom the Apostle doubtless intendeth that which is truly spiritual and saving; and this not only Wisdom necessary in some particular Case, as when Persons are under Affliction and Tribulation, as in the foregoing Verses, but also in every other Case; such as is intended Job 28. 28. and Prov. 2. 10.

The Persons to whom this Promise is made are any that lack Wisdom, as in the Text, *If any of you lack Wisdom---*. For tho' this Epistle was more immediately written to those mentioned in the Inscription of it, Chap. 1. Verse 1. yet it was no Doubt intended for the Instruction and spiritual Good of all that read it? For thus the Spirit of God speaking in the Scripture, is to be understood, Rom. 2. 29. Mark 13. 37. And who is there that lacketh this Kind of Wisdom more than those do, that have none of it; which is the Case of all unregenerate Persons. But if it should be here said, that by such as lack this Wisdom, we may understand such as are sensible of their Need of it; to this I answer, That tho' I cannot believe that the Direction here is given only to such, inasmuch as it may encourage those that are not yet duly sensible how much they need it, to endeavour to become so; yet supposing this to be true, there is no Reason to question, but that Persons still in an unregenerate State may be sensible that they need spiritual Wisdom. Those that are sensible that they need

Happiness,

Happiness : And I believe it is possible, that an unregenerate Person may be convinced that it is impossible that he should be made truly happy and blessed, without being made spiritually wise. I know that natural Men are apt to place their Happiness in sensual Objects ; but is it not possible for them to be convinced of their Error and Mistake in this, 'till after they are savingly converted ? I incline to tell People who are convinced of this, that it belongs to the Work ordinarily required as *preparatory* to Conversion, rather than as an essential Ingredient in it : For how should any sincerely turn to God, 'till first convinced of the Vanity of the Creature ? If an awaken'd Sinner tells me, he is convinced that Nothing in any Creature, or in all of them together, can make him truly happy, I cannot, on this Account, tho' I believe him, assure him that he is in a converted State.

The next Thing to be considered is, the Condition required in order to the obtaining the Wisdom intended ; and this is, that they *ask it of God, who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not*. Here observe, (1) That such as need this Wisdom are required to ask for it. (2) They are required, in asking it, to apply to a right Object, *viz. God*. (3) Here is something to encourage them to do so, *viz. He giveth liberally, and upbraideth not*.

(1) If Sinners need spiritual Wisdom, they must ask for it. The Way of obtaining it is not to acquire it by hard Study, but by Prayer. There is a Sort of Wisdom that may be acquired by Study and Meditation, as other acquired Gifts and Qualifications are ; but this is not of that Kind, nor obtained in that Way, (tho' necessary in the Work preparatory to it) but by fervent Prayer, called in Scripture *asking, seeking, knocking*, Matth. 7. 7, 8. Luke 11. 9, 10.

(2) Those that desire this Wisdom must seek it of a right Object, who is able and willing to bestow it, *viz. God*. So in the Text, *Let him ask it of God*. The most learned Men in the World cannot give this Wisdom, by the best Instructions they can afford : Only God can do this, as we saw before. Prov. 2. 6. *The Lord giveth Wisdom : Out of his Mouth cometh Knowledge and Understanding*. And this Knowledge cometh out of God's Mouth, not only by Means of the Scriptures which he has given by the Inspiration of his Spirit ; but as the Light did which he gave in the Creation of the World, Gen. 1. 3. with which we may compare, 2 Cor. 2. 6. And I may add, that

that when we ask this Wisdom, we must ask it in the Name of Jesus Christ, as we must all other Mercies.

(3) Here is Ground of Encouragement thus to ask this Wisdom of God, viz. *He giveth liberally, and upbraideth not*: He giveth to all that ask for it as they ought to do. He giveth not as Persons of narrow Souls are wont to give their Gifts; nor does he twit and upbraid those who in their Straits seek his Favours: And this, if there had been no more said, gives great Encouragement to ask spiritual Wisdom of him.

But as if this was not enough, there is in the Words a positive Promise, that those who ask it in the Manner required, shall obtain it: *It shall be given him*; exactly answering to what we had before in Prov. 2. 5. *Then shalt thou understand the Fear of the Lord; and find the Knowledge of God.*

But I expect that, against what I plead for the Support of my Hypothesis from this Text, what follows in the two next Verses will be objected, viz. *But let him ask in Faith, nothing wavering: For he that wavereth is like a Wave of the Sea, driven with the Wind, and tossed. For let not that Man think that he shall receive any Thing of the Lord.*

If these Words be objected against what I hold and plead for, I suppose the Strength of the Objection (if it have any) depends on this, that such a Kind of Faith as that described Verse 6. is required to such a successful asking of Wisdom as that spoken of in Verse 5. is what an unregenerate Sinner cannot possibly be the Subject of, but such only as are already in a regenerate State, and so truly and spiritually wise; and that the Wisdom promised to be given to such askers of it as are intended in the Place, must be more of the same Kind that they are endowed with.

Now in Answer to this several Things may be said,

1. I readily grant, that the Asking intended in Verse 5. must be an Asking in Faith: Otherwise it is not such as the Promise is there made to. And indeed it is, I think, impossible, that any Prayer at all should be made to God, without some Kind of Faith in him. Prayer is a coming to God for the Favours we need, and desire him to grant to us. But we are assured in Heb. 11. 6. that, *he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* So that there can be no such Thing as coming to God without believing in him. To the same Effect is it demanded in Rom.

Rom. 10. 14. *How shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? As Men cannot, in a gracious and holy Manner, come to or call upon God, without that Kind of Faith which is peculiar to Persons in a justified and regenerate State; so they cannot, in any Manner, draw near to God, and call on his Name, without some Kind of Faith; at least such as unregenerate Persons may be the Subjects of.*

2. I affirm, that it is possible for unregenerate Persons to believe in God, and in his Son Jesus Christ. Many such have believed. Many unregenerate Persons have believed there is a God, *Jam. 2. 19.* And many unregenerate Persons have had Faith in Jesus Christ, as is evident in *John 2. 23, 24.* and Chap. 12. 42, 43. *Acts 8. 13.* *Matth. 13. 20, 21.* *Luke 8. 13.* That Text therefore, *1 John 5. 1. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God,* must be understood of a Kind of Faith or Believing peculiar to God's Elect, already in a regenerate State. The same may be said concerning Peter's Faith, *Matth. 16. 16, 17.* and their's also in *Acts 13. 48.* Otherwise I know of no Proposition in our holy Religion but what may be believed or assented unto by Persons in an unregenerate State. Unregenerate Persons have the same objective Revelation of divine Truths, and the same rational Evidence to ground their Persuasion of them upon, as the Regenerate have; and this Evidence is sufficient to demand their Assent, and to command it, did they not wilfully refuse to attend to it. If this were not so, unregenerate Persons that do not assent to divine Truths might justify their not believing: For no Man is bound to believe that, of which he has not, or cannot have, sufficient Evidence. For,

3. Unregenerate Persons are able to understand the Evidence given or offered to them, to satisfy them of the Truth of those Things which they are required to believe; so that if they believe them not, 'tis because they shun the Light, and will not consider as they may and ought to do, those Evidences which God favours them with; having an Enmity in their Hearts against the Truths and Objects revealed.

4. All unregenerate Sinners do not thus obstinately shut their Eyes against the Light. They are by common Grace prevail'd with to make a better Improvement of the Advantages they enjoy, than others do. Nor is the Sin of those that refuse Instruction, in this Way offered

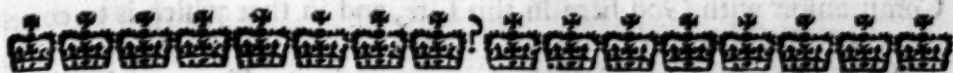
red to them, unavoidable, so that they cannot come to the Knowledge of the Truth, but must necessarily remain Infidels or Unbelievers.

5. The Persuasion which some unregenerate Sinners do, in this Way, attain, is so firm and strong, that it has a great Influence on their Lives. They receive the Word with Joy, and do many Things that are required of them. Such a Persuasion as these have, or may have, of the Truth, is sufficient to produce *Repentance in Sackcloth and Ashes*; insomuch that such are sometimes said to have *escaped the Pollution that are in the World, thro' the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21. and to have been *enlightned*, and to have *tasted the heavenly Gift*, and to have been *made Partakers of the Holy Ghost*, and to have *tasted the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come*, Heb. 6. 4, 5.

Such an Assurance of divine Truths as Persons not savingly converted may, in this Way attain, is sufficient to render them utterly inexcusable if they engage not in the Practice of religious Duties, such as Praying to God in publick, private and secret; and Waiting on him in all the other Ways of his own Appointment, for his saving and everlasting Mercies, and in particular for that spiritual Wisdom here under Consideration: So that such Persons need not be at such Uncertainties, with Respect to the Truth of God's Word, as not to ask these Mercies in *Faith*; especially if they are taught, as I think they should be, that God has firmly *promised* these spiritual Blessings to those that, in a right Manner, ask them of him. They may then *ask them in Faith without wavering, like a Wave of the Sea, that is driven with the Wind, and tossed*, as in the Text objected: Or like *double-minded Men who are unstable in all their Ways*, Verse 8. But on the contrary, they may with some Steadfastness and Constancy, *watch at Wisdom's Gates, &c.* Prov. 8. 34. and not grow weary in well-doing, nor draw back to Perdition, as some do. See Ezek. 33. 13. Heb. 10. 38. Matth. 24. 12, 13.

I might have here shown the Difference betwixt this Kind of Faith, and that peculiar to the Regenerate; but for this I shall refer my Reader to Chap. III. of this second Part of my Essay: And I shall hereafter have Occasion to say something further to it.





CHAP. XIII.

That the conditional Promises of special Mercy made to such as come to JESUS CHRIST, do contain and imply in them a Promise of regenerating Grace.

***** HE Promises which I here intend are such as these following, viz. Matth. 11. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you Rest.* John 6. 35. *And Jesus said unto them, I am the Bread of Life: He that cometh to me shall never Hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never Thirst.* So again in Verse 37. *All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* Such a Promise is also supposed and implied in John 5. 40. *Ye will not come to me, that ye might have Life.* In these Places Jesus Christ freely invites all sinful Men, to whom the Gospel is preached, to come to him for Life and Happiness, promising that if they do, they shall obtain what they come to him for.

Now, this being allowed, as I think it cannot be denied, I shall here briefly consider (1) What the Promises are which Sinners should go to Jesus Christ for. (2) How they should go to Christ for these Benefits. (3) The Security given them, that so doing, they shall obtain them.

1. Let us consider what those Benefits are which Sinners are invited to go to Jesus Christ for. Now to this I say in general, that there is no Reason to doubt but that they are invited to go to Christ for all spiritual Blessings, or for all those everlasting Mercies which he freely bestows on all those whom he eternally saves; all that Fulness which he has in himself, and which is by his People derived from him, as in Col. 1. 19. *John 1. 14, 16.* That Pardon of Sin, or Justification and Adoption are among those Blessings, which Sinners are invited to go to Christ for, is not, I think, at all question'd among

mong us ; and so also the Happiness enjoy'd by true Saints in their Communion with God here in this Life, and in that which is to come.

All the Question here is, whether unregenerate Sinners who enjoy such Invitations by the Gospel, as those above expressed, are not therein invited to go to Jesus Christ also for that Principle of spiritual Life which is given in Regeneration? And this I am persuaded they are ; and can hardly think that any orthodox Divine will deny it. Is not every unregenerate Sinner who enjoys the Gospel, bound to pray as David did in Psal. 51. 10. *Create in me a clean Heart, O God ; and renew a right Spirit within me.* Indeed, we have no Reason to doubt of David's being in a regenerate State, when he thus prayed : But it being after his great Sin and Fall, as appears by the Title of the Psalm, and is further confirmed by the Contents of it, he may be justly supposed to have been under a Cloud, with respect to his spiritual State, and to have wanted that Sense of God's Love, which formerly he enjoyed. Several of his Expressions in the Psalm lead us to think so ; it is therefore no Wonder if he now called the Sincerity of his Heart, and the Truth of his Conversion, in Question, and so prayed for a new Heart, as if he had never before had such an Heart given to him : But he could not desire this but only on Supposition that he had not already what he was concerned that he might not fail of. And thus any Saint that knows not that he is already in a regenerate State, may pray that he may be born again. And those that are indeed destitute of true Grace should pray for it as Ephraim did, Jer. 31. 18. *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned :* And that is to go to Christ, and to God in and by him, for it. We are told, in Acts 5. 31. *That he is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour ; to grant Repentance and Remission of Sins ;* no Doubt the Grace of true Repentance, as well as the Acts and Exercises of it : And this shews us that Sinners should go to him for this Grace, as unto one that has the Words of eternal Life, John 6. 68. The wicked Jews refusing to do this, was no Doubt one great Part of the Crime with which our Lord charged them, John 5. 40. *Ye will not come unto me that ye might have Life.* Or, shall we suppose they were only to go to Christ for Pardon, and not for the Grace of Regeneration, which he also merited for his People, and which they can have no other Way than thro' him, who is that Head of Influence, by which his whole Body is animated and nourished, ; and who *having Life in himself, quickneth whom he will*, Col. 1. 18, 19. and John 1. 16. and Chap. 5. 26, 27. Thus, I think it is sufficiently evident, that unregenerate Persons ought to go to Jesus Christ for spiritual Life, or for the Grace of Regeneration.

2. I am to shew how Sinners are to go to him for this Grace. And here I will venture to say *negatively*, They are not required to go to him for it in the Exercise of the same Kind of Grace. Is it possible for any rational Men to think, that God requiring unregenerate Sinners to go to Jesus Christ for a Principle of spiritual Life, which they are yet without, would require them to come to him for it, in the Exercise of that very same Kind of Grace which he requires them to seek after, and beg for? This is too absurd to be believed.

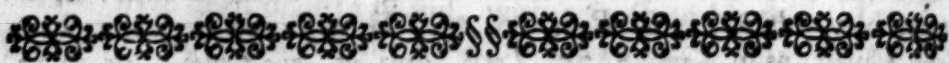
What then, are the Unregenerate in seeking to Jesus Christ for the Grace of Regeneration, required to come to him in Faith, or without any? Surely they are not required to come to Christ without Faith: That would be a strange Way of coming, if any at all. How should they come to their Saviour without having any Faith in him? It is impossible. *Heb. 11. 6. Rom. 10. 14.* How should Persons call on Jesus Christ, as in *Mat. 8. 25. Lord, save us, we perish*; or as in *Verse 2. Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean*, if they do not believe him able to do these Things for them? And the Reason is the same if we go to him for a new Heart, or to give us spiritual Life.

But how should Persons go to Christ in Faith, for such a Mercy, who are not yet born again?

I answer, That the *Mystery is this*, that Persons may have Faith in Christ, tho' they are not yet born of the Spirit, as in *John 3. 16*, or have not yet been made Partakers of the divine Nature, as in *2 Pet. 1. 4*. I have proved this in Chap. XII. to which I here refer my Reader. And I am not yet convinced, that it is impossible for a Sinner not yet born of God, and that has no other Faith than a Person in that Estate may have, to go to Christ for regenerating Grace, or for a new Heart; but I am thoro'ly convinced, that no Sinner is required to go to Christ for the Grace of Regeneration, in the Exercise of the same Kind of Grace.

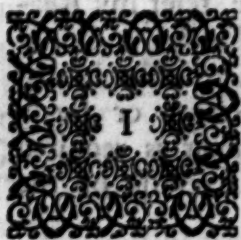
3. We may now consider the Security given to all that come to Christ, in the Manner intended, that they shall obtain the Benefits conditionally promised to them; and so with the rest, the Grace of Regeneration: And the Promise for this is as full and express in the Places quoted, as can be desired. Such *shall never Hunger nor thirst*, *John 6. 35.* Christ will by no Means *cast them out*, *Verse 37.* They shall *find Rest to their Souls*, *Matth. 11. 28.* Which Promises can never be made good to such as go to Jesus Christ for his everlasting Mercies offered to them in the Gospel, unless the Grace of Regeneration

tion be bestowed on them, *that* being one of those for which they are invited to go to him, as I have already shewed. And, as if a Promise without an Oath had not been sufficient, both have been (for the better Satisfaction of such as by Reason of Infirmary need it) given to them, *Heb. 6. 17, 18.* The Promise and Oath of God here mentioned, does not only afford Matter of Consolation to such as have already *fled for Refuge, to lay hold on the Hope set before them*; but also great Encouragement to others to do so, who have not yet done it. Nor ought Sinners to stay till they are born of the Spirit, before they begin thus to do; tho' they should continue coming to Christ after they are born of God, as appears in *1 Pet. 2. 2, 3, 4.* Those who intend never to go to God in Christ for his saving Mercies, will be in great Danger of going forever without them.



C H A P. XIV.

That there are conditional Promises made in the Gospel, to such as PERSEVERE and OVERCOME, which contain in them Offers of the Grace of Regeneration.



IN the present Argument, join together the two Sorts of Promises mentioned, because of their near Relation one to the other; the End of Perseverance being our overcoming the Evils we have to meet with, in the Way that leadeth to eternal Life.

However, I shall first consider those Promises of Salvation, which are made to such as persevere: And here I shall *first* shew that there are several such Promises: And then, *secondly*, make it evident that these contain an Offer of regenerating Grace in them.

First, I will Instance in several such Promises: And such an one is that, which we have, in *Matth. 10. 22. and Chap. 24. 13. He that endureth to the End shall be saved.* If the Circumstances of the Places wherein this Promise is found, be duly considered, none can reasonably doubt that the Salvation intended in it is that which is eternal;

nal ; elsewhere in Scripture called *eternal Life* : And that the Condition on which this Salvation is offered, is Perseverance, is, I think, undeniable. It is called, in the Words under Consideration, *Enduring to the End*, the direct contrary to that *Enduring* and *Believing* only for a while, which Apostates are chargeable with, as appears in *Matth. 13. 21. Mark 4. 17. and Luke 8. 13.* Such a Promise is that also in *Hos. 6. 4.* Such a Promise is also in *Hos. 6. 3. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord : His going forth is prepared as the Morning ; and he shall come unto us as the Rain ; as the latter and former Rain unto the Earth. To follow on to know the Lord,* is to persevere in our Endeavours to get that saving Acquaintance with him, spoken of *Job 22. 21.* And his coming unto such as the Rain, doubtless importeth the plentiful Effusion of the Holy Spirit on them, in his converting and saving Influences, as in *Prov. 1. 23. and Isai. 44. 34, 35.* Another such Promise we have in *Gal. 6. 9. Let us not be weary in Well-doing, for in due Time we shall reap, if we faint not.* Which Promise, I suppose, to be given to such as have begun to seek the Lord, whether they are in a regenerate State or not. With these Texts we may compare what we have in *Heb. 10. 23. and Verse 35,--39.* which I may hereafter have Occasion to consider. Also that in *Ezek. 18. 24, 26.* Some there are that fail and fall short of eternal Life and Happiness, by Means of their Apostacy from God, and their Duty ; but these are not such as have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, but such as have been in the Way to obtain this Mercy.

Secondly, I shall now proceed to shew that such Promises as these contain in them an Offer of the Grace given in Regeneration. And to make this good, the first Thing I shall say is, that they are not made to such as are already in a State of Grace and Salvation, *i. e.* to such as are in a regenerate and justified State, and so already passed from Death to Life, as in *John 5. 24. and 1 John 3. 14.* God does not tell such as these, that if they do not fall from Grace, and again become such as the *unregenerate* are, they shall be saved ; as if their future Salvation were still suspended on this Condition, that they remain true Believers all the Days of their Lives. Such as these have already performed the Conditions on which Salvation is offered to Sinners, and have begun to partake of that Salvation, which God bestows on all who comply with the Terms of the new Covenant ; and all that remains necessary for the perfecting of it is by the Promise and Oath of God secured to them. They may depend upon his perfecting all that concerns them, even their Perseverance in Faith and Holiness to the End is fully secured to them, *Jer. 32. 40. 1 Pet. 1.*

3. 4. 5. The Promise of Salvation which they have already a Right unto, includes in it a Promise of their Perseverance, in Faith and Holiness, even unto Death. Their Perseverance therefore, rather dependeth on their Salvation, than their Salvation on their Perseverance: How then can their eternal Salvation be suspended on this Condition, if they persevere. I wonder any *Calvinist* should thus expound the mentioned Promises so very inconsistently with the Principles professed by them, and, as I shall shew, with the plain Sense of the Places wherein such Promises are found. It is too late to tell Men they shall be saved on this or that Condition, after their Salvation is fully secured, with all Things necessarily implied in it.

The *third* Thing which I have to say respecting the Promises under Consideration, is, that they suppose the Persons to whom they are made, to be already so far forth qualified Subjects to partake of the Good promised, that Nothing is wanting in order to it, but their Continuance or Perseverance in the Way of Duty, in which they are at present walking: For Perseverance is all that is now demanded of them, in order to their being Partakers of the Benefits conditionally promised to them. Unto such therefore that belongs, *Heb. 10. 36. Ye have need of Patience, that after ye have done the Will of God, ye might receive the Promise.* Unto those also that is spoken *Gal. 6. 9. Let us not be weary in Well-doing, &c.* Not that such Persons have already a Right to the saving Mercies of the new Covenant; but because in due Time they shall have an Interest in them, if they go on in the Way they are in, and do not grow weary and give out. Compare with the Text last mentioned, that in *Luke 18. 1, 7.* The Persons therefore, unto whom such Promises are made, are (tho' not in a regenerate State) such as are *striving to enter in at the strait Gate, Luke 13. 24. Or pressing to enter into the Kingdom of God, (or towards it) Luke 16. 16.* being such convinced and awakened Sinners as have *begun to work out their own Salvation with Fear and Trembling, Phil. 2. 12.* and consequently, are such as believe the Word of God, both Law and Gospel, tho' not with that Kind of Faith as is infused into Men's Souls, in their Regeneration. And tho' they are not savingly converted, in the Sense in which that Expression is generally used; yet they have a Repentance like that intended in *Matth. 11. 21.* and are such as have *escaped the Pollutions that are in the World, thro' the Knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. 2. 20.* And are also in a *Way of Well-doing, watching at Wisdom's Gate, and waiting at the Posts of her Doors, Prov. 8. 34.*

Thus the Persons intended are supposed to be serious and diligent Seekers of God, in the Name of Jesus Christ, for his special and saving Mercies, tho' not in a regenerate and justified Estate. And Persons qualified as now expressed, are, I say, qualified to be Partakers of the saving Benefits offered in the new Covenant; so that 'tis no Ways inconsistent with the Truth, Justice and Holiness of God, to bestow these saving and eternal Mercies on them: Yet he has not bound himself by any Promise, that he will immediately save a Sinner so qualified; but is pleased to require Sinners under such Preparations to wait on him during his Pleasure, for the Bestowment of the same upon them: Only he has, (as I think) for their Encouragement, engaged that they shall in due Time reap these Fruits of his special Favour if they faint not.

And now, that Persons may be thus qualified to be Partakers of God's everlasting Mercies, and yet not immediately have the same bestowed on them, but be obliged to wait God's Time, under such Preparations, and this under Pain of falling finally short of the Mercies which they seek, in Case they persevere not, I shall endeavour a little further to clear up.

This would indeed be impossible, if that Kind of Faith, by Divines called *Fides infusa*, were the Condition of the new Covenant; because such Faith necessarily supposeth all that have it to be in a State of Salvation, as I have already shewed. But that Kind of Faith and Repentance, which I look upon as the Condition of the Covenant of Grace, is evidently, in the Nature of it, such as Persons may have before they are in a State of Salvation; and therefore it may be a Truth, (and indeed it evidently is so) that Perseverance is required of such as would be Partakers of God's saving Mercies, in order to their obtaining them; and not only that for a Moment they are qualified, as has been expressed.

This will be further manifest, if we consider, that we may well distinguish betwixt a Condition on which a Benefit is offered, considered materially, or in Respect of the Act or Acts wherein it consisteth; and considered with Respect to the Prolongation or Continuance of the Thing required: If we consider the Nature of the Things required, Persons may, in that Respect, have all that is demanded of them, and yet not have a Right to the Benefits conditionally promised; because they have not continued the Qualifications demanded, so long as is required of them, in order to their having a Right.

Thus in the first Covenant made with Man, he might for a Time continue in that Obedience which was required of him, and yet have no Right to the Life conditionally promised; because he had not stood in Innocency the whole Term of that State of Probation which was by God designed for his Trial. And I know no Reason why it may not be so under the new Covenant also; nay, it seems certainly to be so, inasmuch as God does not only require such Qualifications as are mentioned in the Covenant, but also Perseverance in the Performance of what is required; that is, God requires that we keep Covenant with him, in order to his saving us; and this not by one transient Act only, but by our constant Obedience to his Commandments, 'till we obtain his offered Mercies, as in *Psal.* 25. 10. and 103. 17, 18.

That the Sense which I have given of the Promises under Consideration, is very agreeable with the Scope of the Places wherein we find them, will (I think) appear if we consider them in Connection with the Context, to which they respectively belong. In that *Matth.* 10. 22. those Christians to whom the Promise intended has a Reference, are supposed to be liable to violent Persecutions, under which they would be in great Danger of falling away, as stony-ground Hearers are many of them supposed to do, in *Matth.* 13. 20, 21. and in the other Evangelists. They are therefore encouraged with a Promise of Salvation, in Case they should persevere, which they would not have been in Danger of not doing, if they had been *passed from Death to Life*, in the Sense intended in *John* 5. 24. Those in *Matth.* 24. 13. are spoken to as liable to grievous Temptations, by Reason of that abounding of Iniquity there foretold, which should occasion *the Love of many to wax cold*, as in Verse 12. and so are encouraged to take Heed of Apostacy, from the Consideration of that gracious Promise made to such as persevere; viz. that if they should *endure to the End*, they should *be saved*; they believing only *for a while*, as in *Luke* 8. 13. I may here add, that when some, in the mentioned Place, *Matth.* 13. have Salvation promised to them, in Case they should not fall away, as others would do; the Antithesis expressed in the Words plainly shew, that the same Kind of Faith or Religion is intended in both Cases: So that of the same Sort of Believers some might fall away, and perish, and others persevere, and be saved: And if those who are supposed to fall away, should not do so, but should continue to believe, they should be saved also.

The like may be said with Respect to that Text, *Heb.* 10. 36, 38, 39. *Ye have Need of Patience; that after ye have done the Will of God,*

ye may receive the Promise. Now the Just shall live by Faith: But if any Man (or, as it is in the Original, I am told, if he) draw back, my Soul shall have no Pleasure in him. But we are not of them that draw back unto Perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the Soul. I believe it can never be proved that the Faith intended in Verse 38. is that which is peculiar to the Regenerate; but the contrary seems evident. I grant that, according to the Text, the Faith intended is of the same Kind with that by which the Just do live, that is, it is of the same Kind of Faith with that which is required as the Condition of the Covenant of Grace: And what Kind of Faith that is, I have sufficiently shewed, and proved it cannot be that given in Regeneration. Moreover, when it is said, That the Just shall live by Faith, and it thereupon followeth, If any Man draw back, &c. it seemeth evident, that the same Kind of Faith is by some fallen from, which others persevere in the Exercise of, to the saving of their Souls. Therefore, when it is said, The Just shall live by Faith, the Meaning is, That he shall do so, in Case he persevere in Believing, and continueth a just and righteous Man, in the Sense in which he is at present such an one; which many not doing, God's Soul has no such Pleasure in them, as he has in those who so do. And tho' such as are the Subjects of the Faith intended, are called Just, this may not intend that they are so in the strictest Sense of that Word, any more than that the Term Righteous, must be so taken, in (what I think to be) a parallel Place, in Ezek. 18. 24, 26. But if the Righteous turneth away from his Righteousness, and commit Iniquity, and doth according to the Abominations that the wicked Man doth, shall he live? All his Righteousness that he hath done, shall not be mentioned; in his Trespas that he hath trespassed, and in his Sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die. When a righteous Man turneth away from his Righteousness, and committeth Iniquity, and dieth in them, for his Iniquity that he hath done shall he die. In which Words it is to me so evident, that by a righteous Man, a regenerate Saint cannot be intended, that I think I need not spend Time in making the same manifest, nor am I alone in this Tho't; such a one being spoken of as falling short of Life and Happiness, by turning away from that Righteousness which he once had, when otherwise he might and should have lived. Compare this Place with Ezek. 3. 20. and 33. 18. The Righteous intended in these Places are, I suppose, such as are mentioned in 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21. and there said to have escaped the Pollutions of the World, thro' the Knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and to have known the Way of Righteousness, but to turn again from the holy Commandment. That such righteous Persons as these shall be saved, if they persevere in such Faith and Obedience

bedience as they have attained to, is what I here endeavour to maintain: Not that any can be saved without Regeneration; for Man's Regeneration is his Salvation, *Tit. 3. 5.* But my Meaning is, that such as so believe and obey, shall obtain both Justification and Regeneration, if they persevere in so doing: Otherwise, such as persevere should not be saved, according to the mentioned Promises.

I shall now proceed to consider the second Sort of Promises intended to be insisted on in this Argument, *viz.* Those wherein special Mercies are engaged to such as *overcome*; and in which I suppose the Grace of Regeneration to be conditionally promised. I shall at present only insist on two Places, in which, I suppose, we have such Promises. The first of these is in *Rev. 2. 17.* *To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the hidden Manna, and will give him a white Stone, and in this Stone a new Name written, which no Man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it.* The second Place I intend, is in *Rev. 3. 12.* *Him that overcometh will I make a Pillar in the Temple of my God; and he shall go no more out. And I will write upon him the Name of my God, and the Name of the City of my God, which is the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of Heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new Name.* With Respect to these Places we may consider, (1) The Subjects unto whom these Promises are made. (2) The Promises made unto these Subjects, and that by Jesus Christ himself, whose Words these are.

1. Then, the Subjects unto whom these Promises are made are such as *overcome*. For *to him that overcometh, &c.* which Words being spoken *indisfinitely*, must be understood of all that overcome, whoever they be. But the Objects over whom the Victory intended is supposed to be obtained, is not here expressed, but must be understood from what is said in Scripture, with Respect to that Warfare, wherein Christians are engaged against *the Flesh, the World, and the Devil*, as in *1 Tim. 6. 12. Eph. 6. 10, ----- 17. Jam. 4. 7. 1 Pet. 2. 11.* and many other Places. From whence we may gather, that the Victory intended, is over all the Enemies of our Souls. These are the Things which we must overcome, if we would have the Benefits promised in the Words before us.

But we must consider when or how these Things may be said to be overcome. Now, here it is very necessary that we observe, that there are two Periods, in which, or remarkable Degrees of Victory, with Respect whereunto, Professors of Religion may be said to overcome their

their spiritual Enemies, or to gain the Victory over them. One of these is when they are first savingly united unto Jesus Christ, and so intituled thro' his Merits, to the everlasting Mercies offered in the Gospel. The other is when they are actually possessed of all the Good which Jesus Christ has purchased for them; and which God hath from Eternity purposed to bestow; and are also perfectly freed from all the Evils which their Sin and Fall had brought on them. Now of these two remarkable Seasons and Degrees of the Christian's Victory, it will be to my present Purpose to say something, especially of the first of them; because they ought here to be carefully distinguished.

First then, Professors of Religion may be said to overcome Sin, the World, and the Devil, even all the Enemies of Souls, when by Faith they obtain an Interest in Jesus Christ, and so are united to him, and thro' Grace entitled to all the sure and everlasting Mercies of the new Covenant, offered to sinful Men in the Gospel. Whenever any of the sinful Children of Men are thus interested in Jesus Christ, their Sins are all pardoned, and their Persons justified, by the Righteousness of Christ imputed to them. They are reconciled unto God, adopted into the Number of his Children, being regenerated by his Spirit, and so made new Creatures; And their future Happiness is as fully secured to them, whether they know it or not, as if they were actually in the Possession of the Glory of the World to come: So that now their State is that expressed, John 5. 24. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my Word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting Life; and shall not come into Condemnation, but is passed from Death to Life.* And Rom. 8. 1, 2. *There is therefore now no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit. For the Law of the Spirit in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death.* With these Places do many others agree, some of which I shall only here refer to, as Rom. 8. 32, --- 39. Rom. 6. 14. 1 John 3. 9. John 3. 29. 1 John 5. 28. Psal. 32. 12. Rom. 4. 7, 8. John 10. 27, 29. 1 Pet. 1. 3, --- 5.

When eternal Happiness is thus secured to any of the Children of Men, they may be well said to have overcome; (tho' they are not past having any new Assault made on them by their spiritual Enemies, and suffering greatly by them) so that it may be said to every true Saint, as in 1 John 2. 13. *Ye have overcome the wicked one.* Therefore holy Paul, being justified by Faith in Christ, could say, as in 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. *I have fought the good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness,*

Righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that Day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his Appearing. Note here, that these Words of the Apostle, *I have kept the Faith*, cannot mean that he had persevered to the End of his Life; but that he had done so, till he had secured his future and eternal Happiness, as in the fore-mentioned *John 5. 24.* And such a Victory has every godly Man obtained over the Enemies of his Soul, tho' many such are not, as *Paul*, assured of this.

But there is yet, *Secondly*, a further Victory to be sought and obtained by Christians, over their spiritual Enemies, and all Things that hinder their compleat Happiness, even over all the Evils that trouble and molest them: For which Victory they must wait patiently, 'till their spiritual Warfare be fully accomplished, which it will not be while they live in this World: Nay, their last Enemy will not be destroyed, 'till their Resurrection from the Dead, *1 Cor. 15. 26.* Now the Christian's Progress towards this compleat Victory is but gradual after the first Victory mentioned is obtained, and will be perfect when the good Day arrives, wherein they shall behold God's Face in Righteousness, and all their Tears shall be wiped away.

If it be now inquired which of these Victories thus described, is that intended and referred to in the Places under Consideration, as that which qualifies the Subjects that obtain it, for the Benefits promised to such as overcome; unto this I answer, That the first of these two Victories described must needs be that intended in the Places here discoursed on; because the Promises in them made to such as are Victorious, are of Things belonging, according to the Tenor of the new Covenant, to such as overcome, in the first Sense explained.

This will be evident if we consider what the Benefits are, here promised to victorious Christians. And in the first of these Places mentioned, (*viz. Rev. 2. 17.*) the Things by our Saviour promised to be given to such, are these, *viz.* (1) He will give such an one to eat of the *hidden Manna.* (2) He will give him a *white Stone.* (3) In that Stone, a *new Name written, which no Man knoweth, saving him that receiveth it.*

In the other Place insisted on, *Rev. 3. 12.* the Things promised to the Victorious are these following, *viz.* First, *I will, saith our Saviour, make him a Pillar in the Temple of my God; and he shall go no more out.* Secondly, *I will, saith he, write upon him the Name of my God, and the Name of the City of my God, which is the new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of Heaven from my God: And I will write upon him my new Name.*

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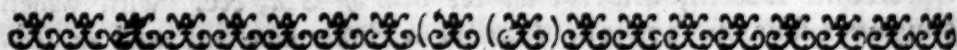
Now can it be imagined by any one who duly considers what is intended in these Promises, that the Subjects unto whom they are made, are such as have obtained a full Victory over all their spiritual Enemies, so as no more to be disturbed by them? Nay, is it not evident, that the Benefits in these Promises engaged, are actually given and granted to all such as are victorious in the first Sense explained? Tho' it be true, that they are still in a militant State, fighting under the Banner of Jesus Christ, the Captain of their Salvation, yet their final Victory is fully secured. Is it not evident that Jesus Christ is the *hidden Manna* intended in the mentioned *Rev. 2. 17*? And is it not equally clear, that all true Believers do now feed on that Bread of Life? as our Saviour sheweth in *John 6. 48,-----58*. Is it not evident that the *white Stone* promised, is given to every regenerate and justified Soul? Is not every true Saint favoured with this precious Gift? Is not the *white Stone* here intended, the same Thing that is elsewhere called a *new and clean Heart, the Seed of God, the divine Nature, the Image of God, &c.*? And is not this an infallible Sign and Token of the Justification of the Person it is given to? Even as the white Stones which were of old given in Courts of Justice, to such as were cleared or judged innocent, were given as a Sign of their Justification. "They, saith *Pareus* on this Place, come nearest the "literal Meaning, who think that Christ in this respecteth the Manner "of Judgment, where there were two Sorts of Stones cast into a "Bason; by the *White* the Innocent were absolved; by the *Black* "the Guilty were condemned." So that, according to *Pareus*, the giving of a white Stone signified that the Person was justified to whom it was given, tho' he has not yet obtained a perfect Victory over Sin and Satan. It is also true that a *new Name* written in the white Stone here mentioned, is given in and with it, and by every true Believer received. This is that Name which God has promised to such as *keep his Sabbaths, and choose the Things that please him, and take hold of his Covenant, Isai. 56. 4, 5. Even unto them, saith he, will I give in mine House, and within my Walls, a Place and a Name better than that of Sons and Daughters. I will give them an everlasting Name that shall not be cut off.* The same Name is intended in *1 John 3. 1. Behold, what Manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the SONS OF GOD.* Nor is this a Name only, but both the Name and what is signified by it, as by the next Words appeareth. *Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, &c.* with which compare *2 Cor. 6. 17, 18. I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my Sons and Daughters, saith the Lord almighty.* This is a Privilege belonging to every true Saint.

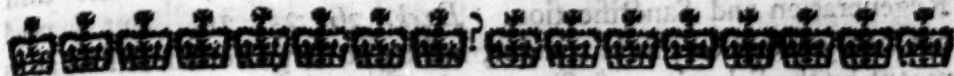
The same may be said with Respect to the Privileges or Benefits promised in the other Place mentioned, Rev. 3. 12. Every such an one is made a Pillar in the Temple of God, that shall go no more out, &c.

But for the further clearing up of this Point, it must be here observed, That we must carefully distinguish betwixt the Victory Men may be said to obtain over Sin and Satan, in they Way of their own Duty, while they are called to strive against them, in a Course of Well-doing, and that which they obtain by what God himself does for them, when they have so far overcome, thro' his Grace assisting them, as to have done what is required *on their Part*, in order to God's doing for them what is necessary *on his*, for the perfecting of that Victory, which is desired and endeavoured after.

Now, Man may be said, on his Part, to overcome and be victorious, when he has thro' Grace so far prevailed, as to have come up to the Terms of the Covenant, wherein everlasting Mercies are offered and conditionally promised to him : And yet his Victory cannot be said to be compleated, (taking in God's Part of the Work) till God has also performed the Promise made to Man, on Condition of his doing what on his Part is required. Thus distinguishing, we may truly affirm, that Man must first overcome so far as is required of him, before he may expect that God will perfect his Victory, by doing what he hath conditionally promised.

And thus it may be affirmed, that a Sinner must himself first overcome, before God will give him to eat of the hidden Manna ; give him a white Stone, with a new Name written in it ; make him a Pillar in the Temple of God, that shall go no more out ; write on him the Name of God, &c. All which denote God's granting his saving and special Mercies to him, as I have shewed above ; but all such Mercies are given in the Way of a Covenant, the Condition of which must be complied with, before a Sinner can, in that Way, obtain them : Nor does our coming up to the Terms of the Covenant suppose or imply our having any such Mercy before we so do. I intend such Mercies as Regeneration and Justification are. And yet I shall not doubt to affirm that no Sinner ever complied with the Terms of the new Covenant, without having the distinguishing Grace of God magnified towards him ; and this I hope I shall make manifest before I have done.





CHAP. XV.

That Sinners do therefore perish, because they receive not the Love of the Truth, that they may be saved, an Argument that they have an Offer of true Holiness made to them.



GROUND the Argument proposed in the Title of this Chapter, on the Text alluded to in it, viz. 2 *Thes.* 2. 10. where the Apostle speaking of *them that perish*, under the antichristian Apostacy, declares that they therefore perish, *because they receive not the Love of the Truth, that they might be saved.* Now I shall endeavour to shew how these Words serve to my Purpose, by considering (1) What we may understand by their *perishing*, who fail of the *Salvation* mentioned in the Text. And (2) The Reason given of their *perishing* as they do. (3) The Inference that I draw from hence, viz. That this shews, that they have an Offer of a Principle of true Grace or Holiness made to them.

1. Then, I will consider what is meant by their *perishing*, who receive not the Love of the Truth, that they might be saved. Now this may be the better understood, if we consider what that *Salvation* is, which is opposed thereunto: For there is no Doubt but that the Perdition of those that perish, and the *Salvation* of those that perish not, but have everlasting Life, are so naturally opposed one to the other, as to instruct us in the Nature of each of them, if we compare them together.

Now by *Salvation* we are not here to understand that Happiness only, which those that shall attain to it, shall enjoy in the World to come; but it does comprise in it also the preparing such *Vessels of Mercy* for the Enjoyment of that *Glory* which is intended for them: And thus this *Salvation* does include in it, Men's being saved from their Sins, as

in *Matth. 1. 21. i. e.* not only the Pardon of them, but also their Regeneration and Sanctification. *Ezek. 36. 25, 26.* But I need not here enlarge on this Particular, having at large considered what is meant by the Salvation of Sinners, in Part I. Chap. II. to which Place I refer my Reader.

But now, if we understand this of such perishing of Sinners as is fitly opposed to the Salvation of those that believe, we shall find it to comprehend much more in it, than the Pain and Torment endured by the Wicked in *another World*, viz. Their being suffered to remain under the Guilt and Power of Sin, in *This*; and so to *pine away in their Iniquities*, and *die in their Sins*, without Repentance, and without a Pardon, in a State of Condemnation, and having the Wrath of God abiding on them; the Case of all such as fall short of the Salvation of God; as is in the holy Scriptures abundantly declared. I shall only refer to some of the Places declaring so much. Those who please, may read and compare such as these, *Ezek. 33. 10. Isai. 22. 14. John 8. 21, 24.* and Chap. 3. 36. The Unregenerate and Unjustified are *dead in Sin*: And to remain in that State is to perish, as well as to be punished for Sin in the Life to come.

2. I proceed to consider the *Reason* why such *perish*, as do so. Now this is fully and plainly expressed in the Place under Consideration: And they therefore perish *because they receive not the Love of the Truth, that they may be saved.* Now, to clear up this, we may consider, (1) What is here intended by the *Truth*. (2) What is meant by the *Love* of it. (3) What we may understand by Persons *receiving* this Love. (4) That Sinners *might be saved* if they would do this. (5) That they perish *because* they refuse thus to do.

1. Let us *first* consider what is here meant by the *Truth*. Now, tho' the Word *Truth*, has many Acceptations in Scripture; yet there is no Doubt but that by the Word *Truth* we may here understand all the divine Truth which God has revealed and made known unto Man, in order to his Duty and Happiness, both by his Works and by his Word; especially in the Gospel of his Son Jesus Christ: This great Truth comprehendeth in it, all those excellent and glorious Truths, which are necessary for Mankind to understand and believe, in order to their Well-being; especially those that relate to the Way of Man's Redemption by Jesus Christ, and Regeneration by the holy Spirit. This Collection of sacred Truths, is emphatically called *the Truth*, in 2 *Thef. 2. 13.* -----God hath from the Beginning chosen you to Salvation,

tion, thro' Sanctification of the Spirit, and Belief of the TRUTH. Thus the same is also called, in *Gal. 3. 1. 2 Tim. 2. 25. 1 Pet. 1. 2.* and *2 Thes. 2. 1.* with many other Places which I need not transcribe.

2. The next Thing we have to consider, is, what we may understand by the *Love of the Truth*. Now, to this I say, That this Love is such an Approbation and Acquiescence of the Heart in it, as is suitable to the Nature and Excellency of the Things supposed to be loved. This supposeth an Assent of the Understanding to it, as being what it is; and in that Respect good, which no Falshood is. But a Soul that loves the Truth here intended, does not stay here, but approves of it, and takes Satisfaction in it, as it is divine, proceeding from God, and being worthy of him: And in Respect of the Things revealed by it, exceeding excellent; and necessary to be known by the Children of Men: And on these Accounts he takes Pleasure in it.

A Soul thus loving the Truth, savoureth the Things of God, as truly excellent and glorious. He can say from the Bottom of his Heart, as in *2 Kings 20. 19. Good is the Word of the Lord*; and as in *Rom. 7. 22. I delight in the Law of the Lord after the inward Man*; and as in *Psal. 119. 140. Thy Law is very pure; therefore thy Servant loveth it*. The Precepts, Promises, and Threatnings of God's Word are all esteemed by him, as in *Psal. 119. 128. I esteem all thy Precepts concerning all Things to be right; and I hate every false Way*. A Lover of the Truth is a good and holy Man. He that has the Love of the Truth in his Heart, has the Love and Fear of God also in it. In a Word, such an One has a Principle of true Holiness in his Soul. He has the *Seed of God* in him, as in *1 John 3. 9*. He has been made Partaker of the divine Nature, as in *2 Pet. 2. 4*.

3. The third Thing to be considered, is, what it is to receive the Love described; and so what it is not to receive it. Now, to this I say, That this must needs be done by some Act or Acts of the Person said to do it; which are required, in order to his having of it, and which it is Man's Duty to perform. It cannot intend only his being made Partaker of it, without doing any Thing in order to it. This does from hence appear to be a Truth, That Men's not receiving the Love of the Truth, is in the Text spoken of as the Sin and Crime for which such Offenders eternally perish. Now, if something were not required of Sinners, in order to their being made Partakers of it, it could not be charged on them as their Crime, tho' it might be their great Misfortune (if I may be allowed to use that Word) that they partake

take not of it. God's not bestowing the Love of the Truth on any Sinner, would not be the Sinner's Fault, if nothing were required of him in order thereto. When not receiving the Love of the Truth, is spoken of as the Sin and Crime of those who have it not, this plainly implies, that such as have this Love, have it in the Way of a Gift from another, even from God himself, unto which their Act of receiving or accepting it is necessary. It is not said that Sinners perish for not loving the Truth; but for not receiving that Love: By which we are taught, that it is the Gift of God; inasmuch as it is to be received from him; and that Sinners have a conditional Offer of it made to them; as will by and by more fully appear.

4. The fourth Thing in Order, is, to shew that Sinners *might be saved*, if they would *receive the Love* spoken of. By the Text we are assured, that those who perish, do so, because they receive not this Love, that they might be saved. In which Words it is plainly intimated, that they might and should be saved, did not their Refusal of the Love of the Truth, hinder it: And it accordingly followeth in Verse 11, 12. That for this Cause God sends some *strange Delusion*, that they should believe a Lie: That they all might be damned, who believed not the Truth, but had Pleasure in Unrighteousness. In these Words, what is called *perishing*, and opposed to Men's being saved, is signified their being given up to such Unbelief and Hardness of Heart, as will end in their eternal Torment.

5. And *fifthly*, it followeth, (as is above supposed) that the Reason why Men perish, under the Gospel, is because they receive not the Love of the Truth. If they would accept of that precious Gift, they should not *perish*, but have *everlasting Life*. Nothing can be more evident than this, in the Place under Consideration. The main Scope and Design of the Place is to assert this Truth: Which Truth having now cleared up, I shall

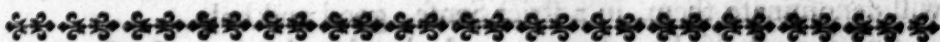
3. Proceed, to clear up the Consequence which I draw from the Premises: Namely, That it from hence followeth, that a Principle of true Grace or Holiness is offered to Sinners in the Gospel.

It is evident that such a Principle of Holiness is plainly implied in the Love of the Truth, of which I have been speaking: And it is also manifest, that Men's not receiving (*i. e.* refusing, or not accepting) of this divine Principle, plainly supposeth their having, in the Gospel, an Offer of it made to them; for how is it possible, that Persons should be guilty of a heinous Sin, in not receiving from the Hand of

Another,

Another, a Benefit which they never had any Offer of? And how should their Refusal of such a Mercy be the Cause of their eternal Ruin? If he who alone had the Disposal of it, never declared his Willingness to confer the same upon them, on any Terms whatsoever; or never proposed any Condition on which the same might be obtained; or never said to Persons destitute of it, as in Rev. 3. 18. *I counsel thee to buy of me Gold tried in the Fire, that thou mayst be rich; and white Raiment, that thou mayst be clothed, and that the Shame of thy Nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine Eyes with Eye-Salve, that thou mayst see.* Which Gold, &c. here spoken of, certainly compriseth a Principle of true Holiness in it; and albeit it cannot be properly purchased by any Sinner, yet it may, on some Terms or other, be attained: And less than this, I think, cannot be implied in the Words.

Now, if I am asked what the Terms are, on which this inestimable Benefit may be acquired, I need here only say, that they are the same which I have, in this Essay, more than once declared to be the Condition of the new Covenant, or Covenant of Grace; more especially this is done in this second Part, Chap. III. whereunto, for the avoiding of Prolixity, I shall here only refer my Reader.



C H A P. XVI.

The Doctrine pleaded for, in this Part of my Essay, very consistent with that of Men's utter Inability, while in a State of Nature, to perform any truly holy Action whatsoever.



MY Design in the following Chapters of this second Part of my Essay, is, to answer several Objections which are apt to be made against the Truth, which I have thus far by Scripture and Reason endeavoured to confirm; and I shall not willingly omit such as I think have most Appearance of Weight in them. In this present Chapter I shall consider that which, with some Appearance of Reason, may be objected from the Accounts

we have in Scripture, of the Corruption of Man's Nature since the Fall ; and his Impotence thence arising, with Respect to Things spiritual, and truly holy, from whence his Inability, by Nature, to comply with the Terms of the new Covenant, is, with a very considerable Shew of Reason and Piety, by many, endeavoured to be manifested ; whether with any good Success, and real Strength, with Respect to my Hypothesis, I shall now endeavour to weigh in the Ballance of the Sanctuary.

But let us a little consider what may be truly said, with Respect to Man's Impotence while he is in a State of Nature : And here, I readily acknowledge, that while he is in that State, he has no Power to perform any Action whatsoever, in a gracious and holy Manner. I constantly affirm, that unto the Performance of an Action as is expressed, it is absolutely necessary that the Person performing it, be first endowed with a Principle of true Grace and Holiness, from which such an Action may spring or flow. The Tree must be good, before the Fruit can be so, *Luke 6. 43, 44, 45.*

Men in a natural or unregenerate State, may, indeed, perform Actions that are materially good, or in Respect of the general Nature and Kind of them, and so such Actions as God has commanded them to perform ; but they cannot perform them in such a Manner, as will denominate them, in a strict Sense, good and holy.

And it must also be acknowledged, that Mankind are, by Reason of the Corruption of their Nature, so *bent* and inclined to do that which is evil, and so *disinclined* and backward to do well, that it is not easy for them to do those Things that are materially good, and to forbear the contrary to them ; tho' this be not wholly above their Power ; for they frequently, while in a State of Nature, do the Good and abstain from the Bad. I think that in these Things I agree with the Generality of those who are Pious and Orthodox.

And from what I have now said, I infer, that the Difference betwixt me and those who mislike my Hypothesis, does not lie in this, that I exalt the Power of Men in their natural State, more than they do ; but in this rather, that I exalt the Grace of God more : For whereas they affirm, that the Faith and Repentance which God requires as the Condition of the Covenant of Grace, is such as none can exercise 'till they are become good and holy Persons, being born of the Spirit, and become new Creatures ; I on the contrary endeavour to maintain, that the Faith and Repentance, by God required as the Condition of the new Covenant, is of a lower Kind than those who

oppose

oppose me will allow of ; and suppose it to be such as Men, by divine Assistance, can perform, before they are savingly renewed by the Spirit, and so become true Saints, as all that are *born of God* are, and so in *Christ*, and *passed from Death to Life*, as in 2 Cor. 5. 17. and *John* 5. 24. does appear. I really think that God, in the Covenant of Grace, does not insist on such Terms, as my Opposers imagine, and which can never be complied with by any Sinner, while he is in his miserable and undone Estate ; but then only, when he has got into a State of Safety, and has already obtained eternal Life.

Those therefore who would convince me of a Mistake in this Affair, should answer my Arguments, by which I endeavour to prove, That “neither Regeneration, nor any Action implied in it, can be the Condition on which Salvation is offered to Sinners in the Gospel.” Part II. Chap. V. And they should also shew, if they can, that such Faith and Repentance, as I hold to be the Condition of the new Covenant, neither is, nor can be so, by a Confutation of what I have said, Part II. Chap. III. and elsewhere.

But it may be here said, That by my own Confession, Sinners are required to *come to Jesus Christ for Life*, on Pain of eternal Damnation ; which Coming must needs be included in the Condition of the new Covenant, and is so, as appears in *John* 6. 35, 37. *Matth.* ix. 28. And yet the Coming intended, cannot be in the Power of any Person, while in a State of Nature ; for our Saviour himself tells us, in the said 6th Chapter of *John*, Verse 44. That *no Man can come to him, except the Father which hath sent him, draw him* : And in Verse 65. he says, *No Man can come unto me, except it were given him of my Father*.

Now, to this Objection, I answer, (1) By acknowledging that Coming to Jesus Christ for Life, belongs to the Condition of the new Covenant, or rather, is the Condition intended, or Thing required, in order to the Salvation of sinful Men. (2) By affirming that Persons in an unregenerate State, may have Power to come to Christ for eternal Life. The last of these only needs to be considered : And the Question here is not whether any Man can come to Jesus Christ, except the Father draw him and incline his Heart to come ; which must be denied ; but what that Drawing is, which is intended in the Words under Consideration ; and whether none but those that do come to Christ, have the Drawing intended.

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Those who oppose my Hypothesis, suppose that that divine *Drawing* which our Saviour speaks of, consists in that powerful Influence of God on the Souls of Men, whereby there is a saving Change wrought in them, in Respect whereof they are said to be born of the Spirit; and consequently that such as have not such a Change wro't in them, have no Power to come to Christ. But at present I see no Reason to believe, that the *Drawing* intended by our Lord, means the efficacious, and indeed, irresistible Influence of the holy Spirit, in the great Work of Regeneration. I will offer some Reasons why I think this not to be intended in the Places quoted.

And the first Reason which I shall name is, Because when Sinners are invited to come to Christ for Life, one Thing intended in the Life which they are to go to Christ for, is the Grace of Regeneration, or that Principle of spiritual Life which we lost by the Fall, and which in the Work of Regeneration is restored: Or is it not true that Sinners are called to go to Christ for this, which is one of the principal Benefits which he purchased for his People, yea even for the very first Beginnings of this spiritual Life? I hope none will dare to deny this.

Now, if Sinners are invited to go to Christ for this Principle of Life, or Grace, how can it be possibly imagined that their first having it is necessary in order to their doing it? For must they first have the Life they should go to Christ for, before it is possible for them to go to him for it? I cannot yet understand this!

My second Reason is this: The Expression used in the Words under Consideration, seems not well to agree with the Work intended, if by *Drawing*, the Work of Regeneration be meant. The Work of Regeneration is wro't by the immediate Operation of the Spirit; and it is, according to the Language of Scripture, a *creating Work*, *Psal.* 51. 10. *Col.* 3. 10. And it is compared to that mighty Act of God's Power, by which Jesus Christ was raised from the Dead, *Eph.* 1. 19, 20. It is also called the giving a *new Heart* and a *new Spirit*, *Ezek.* 11. 19. and 36. 26. Now this Work seems not to be well expressed by the Word *Drawing*, which suits better to Persons being persuaded in a moral Way, than their having a supernatural Work wro't in them by infinite Power. I confess the Word *Drawing*, may be used in a physical Sense, but then I think it is not with Application to moral or rational Agents, as such, as in the Case under Consideration, which concerns Men's being drawn to their Duty, in a Way, no Doubt, agreeable to their Natures. To draw a free Agent into Action, is, in a rational Way, to excite him to it; and it is such Drawing that Men

Men need in order to their coming to Jesus for his saving Benefits, whether it be before their Regeneration, or after it : And when they are effectually drawn in this Way, it is given to them to come to Christ, as in one of the Places quoted, viz. *John 6, 65.*

I shall here add, *thirdly*, That this Word *Draw*, and other Words like it, are used in Scripture, in the same Sense I plead for, i. e. to persuade Persons to what is their Duty and Interest, in a moral or rational Way : Yea, whether this Course have Success or not, Persons may be said to be drawn, led, or persuaded, &c. See *Hosea 11. 4.* *I drew them with Cords of a Man, with Bands of Love, and I was to them as they that take off the Yoke on their Jaws, and I laid Meat unto them.* *Rom. 2. 4.* *The Goodness of God leadeth thee unto Repentance.* *2 Cor. 4. 11.* *Knowing the Terror of the Lord, we persuade Men.* *Acts 26. 28.* *Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.* *Agrippa* was persuaded, tho' not prevailed with. Persons may be thus drawn and persuaded to go to Christ, who yet never go to him. When our Saviour said, in *John 12. 32.* *And I, when I am lifted up, will draw all Men unto me*, did not mean, I believe, that he would draw all Men effectually of whom he spake. Some he intended so to draw as to leave them inexcusable. See *John 15. 22.* *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had Sin : But now they have no Cloak for their Sin.*

Tho' it be granted that no Man can come to the Son, except the Father draw him : Yet I do not acknowledge, that no Man has Power to come to the Son, except he be drawn effectually, so as actually to come to him ; much less, except he be drawn irresistably, so that he cannot but come to him : This is more than to say that a Man cannot come to the Son, except the Father draw him. Tho' without drawing, Men cannot come ; yet many are drawn who never come. See *Matth. 23. 37.* *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee ; how often would I have gathered thy Children together, even as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings ; and ye would not.*

It may, perhaps, be objected against what I have here said, That such a Drawing of Persons as I have been describing, can give no Power to come to Christ. Drawing in a Way of moral Suasion does not give the Persons drawn any Power which they had not before ; tho' it may excite to the Exercise of Powers they before had.

To this Objection I answer, That Persons may be said to be unable to do this, that, or the other Thing, either in a more proper Sense, when they have no Power latent in them, capable of being so excited and stirred up by proper Means and Motives, suitable for the awakening and exciting such a Power, as Instructions, Exhortations, Promises and Threatnings, &c. or less properly, for such an utter Indisposition to Things proposed to be done, as renders a Person actually incapable of doing them, without some Means used with him, for removing the Indisposition unto which he is subject. Now I suppose Men's Inability to come to Christ, is of the Kind or Sort first named. It consists in the Aversion of their Wills to the Duty proposed to them, and arises from several Causes, such as inherent Corruption, Ignorance, Temptations from without of several Sorts, a contracted Habit by a long Course of evil Doings; of which last see Jer. 2. 24. and Chap. 13. 23.

If Men's Inability to do well be of the latter Sort mentioned, Instructions, Exhortations, Reproofs, &c. are not in the least suited to help and strengthen them. Arguments will give no Power of the Kind needed by the Person that has none; and it is wholly in vain to make use of any to that End. But if a Person's Weakness and Inability to do well, be of the other Kind mentioned, then Instructions, Exhortations, and convincing Arguments, are a proper Remedy against such Weakness, and may greatly strengthen the Subjects of it. Means of this Kind, commonly called *moral Suasion*, can be of no other Use than this: Nor are the same designed by God, for the Production of super-natural Effects, as the immediate End of them: They only enable Men to exercise the Powers they have, but give none to such as are wholly without Strength.

The *Drawing* by the Father, without which no Man can come to the Son, I take to be of this Kind, as above. I do not think that by *Drawing*, our Lord intends the great Work of Regeneration, for the Reasons which I have given: And this Kind of Drawing Sinners have who never yet come to the Son, in those Strivings of the Spirit of God with them, which they often resist and quench, of which hereafter, in Chap. XIX.

But if the Exposition I have given of the Texts objected be refused, and the Sense of them which I oppose be still contended for, let us seriously consider the Consequences which will follow it.

The Design then, with which these Texts are urged, is, to shew that no Man has Power of any Kind, to come to Jesus Christ for everlasting Life, but those only, who, being unto that End first born of the Spirit, do actually go to him, and are eternally saved: So that all others, being wholly without Power to come to the only Saviour of Sinners, do unavoidably continue in that Unbelief, against which eternal Damnation is denounced, *Mark* 16. 16. They *cannot* come to Christ that they may have Life, and this *Cannot*, is not only because they *will not*; but they have no such Power latent in them, which being excited and stirred up, they might go to Christ for the eternal Salvation of their Souls. The Impossibility, therefore, that they are under of going to Jesus Christ for Salvation, is *physical*, as to the Kind of it, and not *moral* only; for they must have a Work of new Creation wrought in them, before this physical Impotence can be removed: Nor are they supposed to have any Offer of this Benefit made to them, on any Condition whatsoever.

Now the plain Consequence of what is thus maintained seems to be this, That all that perish under the Gospel, do perish unavoidably, any Means or Advantages they enjoy notwithstanding. They have no Advantage in their Hands, by the Improvement of which they may make sure of the Salvation of their Souls: This is not promised to them, on any Condition, within the Compass of their Power; nor is any Strength, by which they may close with Christ, ever conferred on them.

Now, if the Case be really such as has been now expressed, I would fain know what Kindness (if any at all) is shewed to those that fail of Salvation: Or will it be said, That in the Revelation of a Way of Salvation by Jesus Christ, there is no real Favour shown to any but those who shall eventually be saved? May we then tell those to whom we preach the Gospel, that unless they obtain eternal Life, God has shown them no real Kindness, in all that which has been done, of which we have an Account in the Gospel? Can we think that the maintaining of this would be to the Honour of divine Grace? For my Part, I cannot think that all that seeming Love which God manifests to Mankind, in sending his Son to redeem a sinful World, and setting up a Treaty of Peace among all those to whom the Gospel is preached, is no Kindness to such as are not eventually saved. Such an Opinion as this seems not to agree with such Texts as these which follow, *viz.* *John* 3. 16. 1 *John* 2. 2. and Chap. 4. 19. so *Luke* 2. 10, 11. 2 *Cor.* 5. 18, 19, 20. and many other Places.

Nor

Nor can I, I confess, see how any should be obliged to be thankful to God for his Goodness in sending his Son to redeem us, and his Gospel to persuade us to be reconciled unto him, if he hath shewed no real Kindness in it. Neither can I understand how Men's Consciences should upbraid them for not doing what they are under a physical Impossibility of performing, tho' they are bound to confess that they are justly deprived of that Power to do well, with which, in their moral Head and Representative, they were endowed.

As yet I cannot see how any Dishonour can be done to the Name and Grace of God, by our believing and asserting, that those who perish under the Gospel, do not fall short of eternal Life, because they cannot, but because they will not, come to Jesus Christ for it. On the contrary, I think it is much to the Honour of God and his Grace, that we believe and confess, that he does in the Way of the new Covenant, put Sinners, to whom the Grace of that Covenant is offered, on a second Trial, wherein they stand Probationers for eternal Blessedness, on Terms possible for them to perform. But I shall consider what may be objected against this.



CHAP. XVII.

*That Grace is not given according to Works,
is no Ways inconsistent with the Hypothesis
by me defended.*

OME may think that if, as I assert, Sinners have in the Gospel an Offer of the Grace given in Regeneration, made to them, it will from hence follow, that Grace is given according to Works; which is an Error condemned in the Church of God, in all Ages; and very contrary to the Holy Scriptures, as in 2 Tim.

1. 9. Tit. 3. 5. and Rom. 11. 6. I shall therefore consider, whether on this Account there can be any just Objection raised against the Position I endeavour to defend. And to this End, I shall consider, (1) What may be intended by Grace in the Objection. (2) What may be meant by its not being given according to Works. (3) Whether, these Things being rightly understood,

stood, the Proposition opposed to my Hypothesis, does really make any Thing against it.

1. Let us consider what we may here understand by Grace. Now by Grace here, the Grace of God is doubtless to be understood: And by God's Grace, his undeserved Favour is most properly meant, in which Sense it being taken, it cannot be obtained by any according to Works: To affirm this would be a plain Contradiction both to itself, and to the Apostle Paul, Rom. 4. 4. *To him that worketh is the Reward not reckoned of Grace, but of Debt.* Also Rom. 11. 6. *If by Grace, then it is no more of Works: Otherwise Grace is no more Grace. But if it be of Works, then it is no more Grace: Otherwise Work is no more Work.* By that Grace which is in Scripture, and by the Church of God in all Ages, denied to be given according to Works, I understand the free and undeserved Favour of God, with all those Benefits which flow from it to his People. Most properly the Grace of God signifies the undeserved Favour of God to those whom he has set his Love upon; and hence, by a *Metonymy* of the Cause for the Effect, the Word Grace is used for those Benefits which God of his free Grace bestows on the Children of Men; especially on those whom he eternally saves. And taken in this Sense, Grace signifies Justification and Adoption; and also that Principle of Grace which is given in our Regeneration, and all those holy Actions which by his adjutant Grace proceed from it.

Now, tho' Grace may be taken in any or all of these Senses, in the Question under Consideration; yet my present Design leads me to consider it as it intends that Principle of Holiness which God bestows on Sinners in their Regeneration; this being that which I say is conditionally offered in the Gospel, and which many deny so to be.

2. Let us consider what is intended by this Proposition, That Grace is not given according to Works. And unto this I answer, that there are two Things, either or both of which may be intended thereby. (1) That God does not bestow his Grace on the Children of Men, in the Way, or on the Terms, of the Covenant of Works, wherein perfect and perpetual Obedience to the Law of God was the Condition whereon Life and Happiness were promised to Mankind. God does not now offer or bestow his Grace on such Terms as these. That Covenant has long since been broken by all Mankind; and all that Good which was conditionally promised in it, utterly and for ever forfeited and lost. Such as will now adhere to this Covenant, can expect no Good at God's Hands, nothing less than the Wrath

Wrath and Curse denounced therein against the Breakers of it, *Gal. 3. 10.* Or, (2) That Grace is not given according to Works, may intend, that it is not given as a just Reward of, or for, good Works performed, tho' they are not supposed to come up to the Terms of the first Covenant. Persons may think that, for the Services they perform to God, they deserve well at his Hand; so that it is but a just and equal Thing that he should save them, tho' they are guilty of many Failings. They may think they carry themselves so well, that God will deal hardly by them, if he grants not his special Favour to them, and think they well deserve it. *Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest it not? Wherefore have we afflicted our selves, and thou takest no Knowledge?* *Isai. 58. 3.* Observe how well the *Pharisee* thought of his Performances, *Luke 18. 10, 11.* Persons that go about to establish their own Righteousness, and obtain God's Favour and Grace on the Account of it, do not always suppose that they come fully up to the Terms of the Covenant of Works. They have too much Light to think so. But, however, they think very much to commend themselves to God, by their good Performances; and on them they trust for Acceptance with him, and for all the Grace they hope to receive from him. This seems evidently to be the Case of those spoken of by the great Apostle of the *Gentiles*, *Rom. 9. 31, 32.* But *Israel* which followed after the Law of Righteousness hath not attained to the Law of Righteousness. *Wherefore? Because they sought it, not by Faith, but as it were by the Works of the Law.* They did not, indeed, expect to be justified, and find Favour with God, by the Works of the Law, or by fully complying with the Tenor of the Law of Works; yet they depended on their own good Works, for the Benefits they needed, and so they sought those Benefits, as it were, by the Deeds of the Law. Compare with this, that in *Chap. 10. 3.* Men oftner miscarry in this Way, than by thinking that they can come fully up to the Terms of the first Covenant. They think to commend themselves to God by their own Righteousness, tho' they do not think that they can do all that the Covenant of Works required.

But the Apostle shews the Vanity of such Hopes, in the mentioned *Gal. 3. 10.* compared with Verse 12. and elsewhere. If Grace were given in the Way such as these seek it, it would be given according to Works. But I acknowledge, that God does not bestow his Grace upon Sinners in this Way. He grants it not to them on Account of any Goodness in them, nor for the Sake of any Works of Righteousness performed by them, as plainly appears in *2 Tim. 1. 9.* *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy Calling, not according to our Works, but according to his own Purpose and Grace which was given*

us in Christ Jesus, before the World began. So again in Tit. 3. 5. Not by Works of Righteousness which we have done, but according to his Mercy he saved us, by the Washing of Regeneration, and Renewing of the Holy Ghost.

3. Let us consider whether the objected Proposition being understood as now explained, any Thing can be inferred from it against the Hypothesis by me defended. And to this I say, I think it will appear there cannot, if we consider what here followeth.

As, *First*, That Grace is, on my Hypothesis, given according to Promise, or in the Way of a conditional Covenant, is not equivalent to its being given according to Works, in the Sense explained. Things may nevertheless be freely given, for being given in the Way of a conditional Covenant. Indeed it is not so, if the Condition required be a valuable Consideration, such as deserves a Reward, or some Testimony of Gratitude, on the Account of Things required to be done ; but very frequently this is not the Case, nor is so in the Case under Consideration, as I shall presently show.

However, If God's bestowing his Benefits on Men, in the Way of a Covenant, wherein something is required to be done by them, in order to their obtaining of them ; and unto the doing whereof a Promise is annexed, would infer or imply their obtaining them by their own good Works or Merits, it would from hence follow, That Pardon of Sin and eternal Blessedness are Benefits given according to Works ; for these Benefits are certainly obtained in a covenant Way. The Scriptures are plain as to this ; and none, that I know of, besides *Antinomians* deny it. I shall only refer to some of the Texts in which this is manifest : I need not transcribe them. See *Mark* 16. 15, 16. *Acts* 2. 37, 38, 39. and Chap. 10. 43. and 16. 30, 31. *Psal.* 103. 17, 18.

Tho' our Divines many of them deny, that the Grace of Regeneration, or of a new Heart, is given in the Way of a conditional Covenant ; yet I suppose there are scarce any of them but what own Justification, Adoption, and eternal Glory to be thus given : But now, if, because I hold that God gives his Holy Spirit, and the saving Graces thereof, in the Way of a conditional Promise, it be thence inferred, that, according to my Hypothesis, it is given according to Works, or according to Men's Merits, I would know if it would not as well follow from the same Premises, with Relation to the other mentioned Benefits, that they also are given according to Works, or the Merits of those on whom they are bestowed : But as this does not follow from the mentioned Premises, so neither does the other.

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Secondly,

Secondly, The Grace of Regeneration cannot, on my Principles, be given according to Works; because, on my Hypothesis, no Man can perform any good Works, properly and strictly so called, 'till after he is regenerate or born again. That Grace may be given according to Works, two Things seem necessarily required, *viz.* (1) That the Works are really good and holy, with Regard to which the Grace intended is supposed to be given: For it is not likely that God should give his Grace as a Reward for Works not truly good and holy. (2) That the Works intended be done before the Grace is bestowed, which is supposed to be given as a Reward of them: For the Thing for which a Reward is given must needs be prior to that which is given as a Reward of it. But I, as well as those with whom I dispute, am fully of Opinion, that no Man can perform any good Action, (meaning by good what is in a proper and strict Sense so,) 'till after he is *born of the Spirit*, or *created anew unto good Works*, as in *Col. 3. 10.* with which compare *Ezek. 36. 26, 27.* and *Luke 6. 43, 44, 45.* How then should the Grace of Regeneration be given, on my Principles, according to Men's good Works or Merits?

If we duly consider what, according to my Principles, is really required of Sinners, in order to their obtaining the Grace of Regeneration, it will plainly appear, that Grace is not given to them according to Works. The Condition on which, according to my Opinion, Grace is offered to them, does neither consist in the perfect Obedience which the Covenant of Works required, nor yet in such Holiness as the Gospel requireth of regenerate Saints: If it required the last of these no Person could ever be regenerated or born again.

But what the Gospel requires of unregenerate Sinners, to the mentioned End, comprises in it such Things as these, *viz.* (1) That they acknowledge their Sinfulness, both by Nature and Practice, and that they deserve eternal Damnation. (2) That they acknowledge the Guilt of their many and mighty Sins, and that without the Pardon of them they never can be saved. (3) That they are sensible of the Corruption of their Natures, and their Need of regenerating Grace. (4) That they believe the good Tidings of that Salvation by Jesus Christ, which is revealed in the Gospel, and do not despair of God's Mercy. (5) That they seek earnestly to God for the Pardon of their Sins, and the regenerating Influences of his Spirit, seriously waiting on him in the Use of those Means which he has directed to, in order to their obtaining these Mercies. (6) That they carefully avoid all those sinful Courses which tend to provoke him to deny his Holy Spirit, or withhold the same from them. (7) That they perse-

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severe in the Way of their Duty, that has now been expressed. (8) That they confess, that in all this they are unprofitable Servants, and instead of doing more than their Duty, they fall infinitely short of it, and so are not worthy of the least of God's Mercies, much less of Pardon of Sin, and the saving Graces of God's Spirit here, and eternal Glory hereafter. (9) That they earnestly plead with God the Promises of his Mercy, made to such as seek him for it; such as we have in *Matth. 7. 7,---11. Prov. 1. 22, 23, Luke 11. 9,---13. Prov. 2. 1,---5. Hos. 6. 3.*

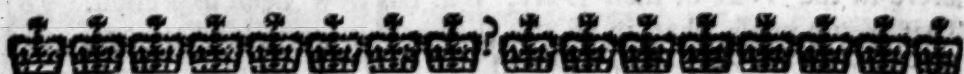
If in this Way Sinners seek and obtain the saving Graces of God's holy Spirit, they will find no Occasion of boasting that they obtained them by Works of Righteousness which they have done, or by the Desert of their own good Works, and so have merited eternal Life at the Hand of God. There is not the least Appearance of any such Thing in the Method proposed, of Sinners seeking Mercy of the Lord; they having Nothing to recommend them to him, or to plead with him, but their own Poverty and Misery, and the Riches of his Grace and Mercy, and most gracious Covenant: All which is nothing like trusting in, and pleading, their own Righteousness. Our supposing that to our obtaining the Grace of God, our begging God's Mercy, pleading the Merits of his Son, and his Truth and Faithfulness to his Covenant, is not, I think, to hold, that Grace is given according to Works, but well consisteth with that *Eph. 2. 9. and Rom. 3. 27. Where is Boasting then? It is excluded. By what Law? Of Works? Nay: But by the Law of Faith.*



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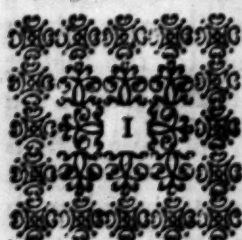
CHAP.





C H A P. XVIII.

That the best Actions of the Unregenerate are not properly called Sins, nor incapable of being Conditions of the Covenant of Grace.



I HAVE owned and asserted in the foregoing Chapter, That Persons in an unregenerate State, cannot perform any Actions that are, in a strict Sense, holy, and as such, well-pleasing in God's Sight ; but I think they carry this too far, who affirm the best Actions of the Unregenerate to be properly dominated Sins, and an Abomination in God's Sight, and accursed ; yea, that *common Grace is Sin and Lust*. I chuse not to name the Persons who express themselves after this Manner, but can do it, if it be necessary for my own Justification.

I confess, if what is to this Effect said by many, be true, it will follow, that nothing that can be done by any Person that is not *born of the Spirit*, can be the Condition of the new Covenant, and as such, entitle the Doer of it to eternal Life. I shall therefore endeavour to make it appear, that that which is asserted, as above, is not to be admitted as a Truth, however worthy the Names of the Persons are who have spoken to this Purpose. And to this End I shall make some Observations relating to the Matter under Consideration ; which being put together, will, I think, sufficiently clear up the Point in Debate.

And *First*, Even those Actions that are esteemed materially evil, as being expressly forbidden by the Law of God, and may on that Account be opposed unto such Actions as are said to be materially good ; even such Actions as these, I say, have something that is good in them. It is generally acknowledged that these Actions, considered in the physical Entity of them, are good Things ; and that they are only evil, considered in respect of the Relation they bear to the divine Law, which they are a Transgression of ; so that tho' such Actions cannot be performed without the Commission of Sin in the doing of them, being so forbidden ; yet there is a Distinction to be made betwixt the Actions themselves, considered only as Actions, or in respect of the Substance

Substance of them, and considered with Respect to the Obliquity of the same Actions, as they have a Relation to the Law of God, wherein they are forbidden to the Persons who sin in doing them. Such Actions therefore, seem more properly called *sinful*, than *Sin* in the Abstract; because the *former* distinguisheth betwixt the Act itself, and the Vitiosity of it, whereas the *latter* does not.

Secondly, There is a great Difference betwixt such forbidden Actions and such as are not forbidden, but may either lawfully be done or let alone: And it seems not very proper to call those Actions Sins, which God has no where forbidden. It is readily granted, that Persons may sin greatly in the Performance of such, *viz.* either in the Manner how, or End for which they do them; but not in doing the Thing done by them. When therefore it is said, That *the Ploughing of the Wicked is Sin*; this must not be understood as if their so doing was Sin in the Abstract; but the Meaning is, That the Wicked sin in their Ploughing, *i. e.* that their is Sin cleaving to this Action of their's, tho' it be in itself no Sin: And thus I acknowledge, that there is Sin cleaving to the best Actions of the best Men, *Eccle.* 7. 20. But more abundantly to the Actions of the Unregenerate.

Thirdly There is a still greater Difference between the forbidden Actions of the Unregenerate, and those which they do, being commanded to perform them. For Instance: God forbids them to take his Name in vain, but requires them to call on him. Their doing the first of these is no doubt a great Sin: But is their calling on him a Sin too? Or is their doing it their Sin? I think not. It may indeed be truly said, that they sin in not doing it as they ought. But this may be truly said of the Actions of the Regenerate also, tho' the Unregenerate fail much more in this Respect. I think there is a great Difference betwixt saying, all the Prayers of the Unregenerate have Sin in them, and saying they are all of them Sin.

Fourthly, There is a great deal of Difference between such Actions as have some positive Wickedness committed in the Performance of them, and such as are only negatively faulty, inasmuch as they want some good Qualifications which they have not: As suppose one Man performs a materially good Action, out of some wicked and malicious End, as out of Hatred to God or his Neighbour; but Another performs the same Action, or another like it, not out of any such wicked Design, but yet without any true Love to God and his Neighbour: Are these both alike properly called Sins? Or are they both wicked Actions?

Actions? One of them seems to be so, indeed, being done for a wicked End; but what of Wickedness is there in the other, tho' it would have been much better had there been some other Kind of Goodness in it, which it had not? The Person that does it is, indeed, to blame; but this is because he omitted something which should have been done; not because what he did had any Evil in it. The Distinction I have insisted on, seems evidently countenanced by that Text, *Prov. 21. 27.* according to that Translation of the Words, which I chuse, and Mr. POOL seems best to approve, *viz. The Sacrifice of the Wicked is an Abomination, because he bringeth it with a wicked Mind.* Thus the latter Part of the Verse, gives the Reason of what is affirmed in the first Part of it; for according to this Reading of the Words, they are accounted Wicked, who bring their Offerings with wicked Minds and Intentions; and the Reason of God's abhorring them is, their being offered in such a Manner, or for such Ends. Nor is there any Reason to think that by the Wicked in this Place and others like it, all unregenerate Persons are intended; but such as are meant in *Psal. 50. 16.* not those that are called *Righteous in Ezek. 18. 24, 26.* and several other Places, tho' Unregenerate.

Fifthly, Many of the Actions of the Unregenerate are not only good, as above, but are performed from good Principles and for good Ends. When an unregenerate Person feeds the Hungry, and clothes the Naked, out of natural Compassion which he has towards them, it must be acknowledged that this is a good Principle. It is not indeed true Grace or Holiness, neither is it from a corrupt and wicked Principle, or from *Sin that dwelleth in him.* It is really from Grace, *i. e.* the Grace of Nature, or some Remainder of the natural Image of God, left in Man after his Fall, which is good, tho' it is not Goodness of the best Kind. It is no Part of the Image of God lost by the Fall, and restored in our Regeneration, nor does our Regeneration eradicate, but sanctify it. So unregenerate Persons perform some Actions for good Ends; as when they labour with their Hands that they may get their Bread honestly, and not steal from and rob Others to get it. So when an unregenerate Person reads the Word of God, hears it preached, and meditates on it, and calls on the Lord, to the End that he may escape Damnation, and obtain the great Salvation offered in the Gospel; these are good Ends, such as God requireth him to aim at in the Performance of such Duties. If a Man labours to obtain his own Happiness, this, indeed, is not the highest End of all, which is the Glory of God, *1 Cor. 10. 31.* And even this an unregenerate Person may aim at in what he does, tho' not ultimately,

timately, as what he chiefly intends. Nor ought regenerate Persons to cease to aim at the Salvation of their own Souls, in what they do, after they can aim at a higher End than this.

Sixthly, Many of the materially good Actions which unregenerate Persons perform, are the Effects of the Grace of God, in and upon them; and therefore, I think, not Sins. I cannot think that Actions which Men perform by the Help and Influence of the Word and Spirit of God, are well called Sins. God may be truly said to be the Author of such Actions: It is he, of his Grace, who stirs up and excites poor sinful Creatures to perform the Actions I speak of. He enables and excites them to hear, read, meditate, and pray, &c. and he is the Author of such Faith as they have, who believe sometimes only for a while, as in *Luke 8. 13*. Or may it not be granted, that such Faith, Repentance, &c. as the best, of which unregenerate Persons are sometimes the Subjects, are Effects of the Grace of God, wrought by God's Word and Spirit in their Souls, and frequently called *common Grace*? And are they, this notwithstanding, all Sin, and an Abomination in God's Sight, and, as some say, contrary to saving Grace? I constantly maintain, that there is a *specific* Difference betwixt common Grace, and that which is special; but I see no Reason to oppose them one to the other, as *Contraries* are opposed. Whether by common Grace we intend those gracious Influences of God's holy Spirit, with which the Unregenerate are sometimes favoured, or the good Effects produced in them by these gracious Operations, I am not, for my Part, willing to allow them to be Sin.

Seventhly, I think what is said by that learned Man, Dr. OWEN, in his *Perseverance of the Saints*, Chap. I. Sect. 17. much favours what I have in this Chapter asserted. "Of those who are said to believe
"and to be holy *really*, and in the Truth of the Thing it self; there
"are two Sorts. *First*, Such as having received sundry common
"Gifts and Graces of the Spirit, as *Illumination* of the Mind, *Change*
"of Affections, and thence *Amendment* of Life, with *Sorrow* of
"the World, *legal Repentance*, *temporary Faith*, and the like, which
"are all *true* and *real* in their Kind, do thereby become Vessels in the
"great House of God, being changed as to their Use, tho' not in
"their Nature, continuing Stone and Wood still, tho' hewed and
"turned into the Serviceableness of Vessels, and on that Account are
"frequently termed Saints and Believers. On such as these there is
"a *lower* (and in some a *subordinate*) Work of the Spirit, effectually
"producing (*in* and *on* all the Faculties of their Souls) somewhat that

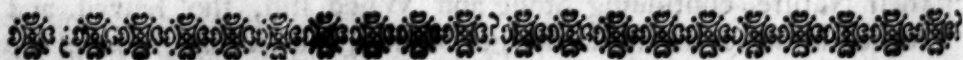
“ is true, good, and useful in it self, answering in some Likeness and
 “ Suitableness of Operation unto the great Work of *Regeneration*,
 “ which faileth not. There is in them *Light, Love, Joy, Faith,*
 “ *Zeal, Obedience, &c.* all true in their Kind, which make many of
 “ them in whom they are, do worthily in their Generation, howbeit
 “ they attain not to the Faith of God’s Elect, neither doth Christ live
 “ in them, nor is the Life which they lead, by the Faith of the Son
 “ of God : As shall hereafter be fully declared.”

I now appeal to such as are judicious, whether the best Actions of the Unregenerate are properly their Sins : If they be not, then we cannot from a false Proposition prove, that none of them can be, by the Constitution of God, appointed to be Conditions of the new Covenant.

I think it plainly appears, from what has been above said, That the best Actions of the Unregenerate, have not more of moral Evil than of moral Goodness in them ; I therefore do not believe any Conclusion that can be drawn from a Supposition hereof.

Eighthly, If the best Actions of the Unregenerate be truly and properly Sins, I see no Reason at present, but that it were better that they were let alone, than done. If it be said, that tho’ the doing of them be Sin, yet it is a greater Sin to omit them ; I answer, that if they are properly Sins, I know not of any Rule Men have, of two Sins to chuse the least : I believe that neither the one nor the other ought to be chosen, but that both ought to be abhorred. Indeed, of two Things where one is less good than the other, if both cannot be done, the best ought to be made choice of ; but where both the Things in Question are properly Sins, this is not the Case.

But I believe that if the best Actions (if I may so speak) of the Unregenerate were really Sins, all the Regenerate would be obliged to repent of all they did before their Regeneration, & in order to it, as their Reading, Hearing, Meditating, Praying for converting Grace, Giving Alms, &c. I confess they ought to repent that they performed these Things in no better a Manner than they did ; but not that they did them at all, tho’ they did them not in such a Manner as the Regenerate only can perform Actions that are good in Respect of the Matter, or general Nature of them.



CHAP. XIX.

The Doctrine I plead for, no ways inconsistent with that of Predestination, and the sovereign Freedom of the Grace of God in the Salvation of his Elect.

FREELY acknowledge that it is implied in the Doctrine I plead for, That Sinners who perish under the Gospel, do not perish for want of Power to comply with the Terms of the new Covenant : That they fail of the Grace of God, or fall short of eternal Life, is (according to my Principles) not because the Condition of the Covenant of Grace is such, that those who are not saved, have no Power to perform it ; but because they will not do so, John 5. 40. *And ye will not come to me that ye might have Life.* And Matth. 23. 37. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy Children together, even as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, and ye would not !* Indeed I cannot see how the new Covenant could be fitly called the Covenant of Grace, if the Condition of it were so very difficult, that all that fall short of the Good of it, might truly plead, That it never was in their Power to comply with the Terms on which Salvation is offered to them in it : But that under all the seeming Advantages of the Gospel which they have enjoyed, their eternal Damnation has been, as to any Thing they could do, utterly unavoidable. Indeed I cannot think this to be the Truth of Man's Case, while he enjoys the Grace of God granted to him, in and with the Gospel, as in 2 Cor. 6. 1.

Now, whether the Doctrine of *Predestination*, and of the free and sovereign Grace of God, manifested in the Conversion and eternal Salvation of Sinners, be at all inconsistent with the Opinion I entertain, is what, in this Chapter, is to be considered.

It is then, or may be here said, that if a sinful Man hath such a Power as is here supposed, it will from hence follow, That his Salvation cannot depend on God's sovereign Grace : For if Grace and

Salvation be offered and promised, on a Condition which Man has Power to perform, or not to perform, then it is in his own Power to determine this Point, whether he shall be saved, or not; and so his Salvation cannot depend on divine Sovereignty, but on his own free Will, which is contrary to the Doctrine of orthodox Protestants, who constantly maintain the Sovereignty of God with Relation to Man's Salvation; which is also agreeable to that of the Apostle *Paul*, *Rom.* 9. 11. and onwards, where he sheweth at large, that *God hath Mercy and Compassion on whom he will*, and he concludeth from it in Verse 19. that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy.

Now, this Objection hath great Appearance of Strength in it; and I know of Nothing that seems to make more against the Doctrine I plead for, than this does: I shall therefore endeavour to give it a just and impartial Consideration, in the Particulars which here follow.

1. As I have formerly said, so I say now, that I am fully persuaded of the Truth of the Doctrine of God's Decrees of Election and Reprobation, as the same is revealed in Scripture; and for the Substance, as it is explained in our *Confessions of Faith* and *Catechisms*, and by our orthodox Divines, such as *Dr. TWISSE*, *Dr. OWEN*, *Mr. NORTON*, *Dr. MATHER*, *Mr. WILLARD*, &c. I hold God's Decree to be absolute, eternal and unchangeable; and that he has chosen a definite Number of Persons to Salvation, whose Names are all written in the Book of Life, passing by and not chusing the Rest, as they are called *Rom.* 11. 7. and that all, and only those that are so chosen shall be eternally saved.

2. I am persuaded, that in chusing a Number of Mankind to Salvation, and in passing by the Rest, God acted in a Way of absolute Sovereignty, doing therein according to his own good Will and Pleasure, not being moved by any Causes or Motives out of himself, as by any Excellency in One more than in Another, or by any Faith or good Works foreseen, or by any Wickedness foreseen in them that are not chosen.

3. I have no Doubt but that God acts as an absolute Sovereign, in the Execution of his Decrees, as well as in willing the Events decreed by him, doing as he will in the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth, *Dan.* 4. 35.

4. I am accordingly well satisfied, that the future and eternal State of Mankind, whether of Weal or Woe, dependeth on the Sovereignty of God, who hath Mercy on whom he will, as is above declared from *Rom.* Chap. 9.

But

But the *great Question* here is, Whether all this being granted and received for Truth, the Inference or Consequence drawn from it in the Objection, that then it cannot be in the Power of those to whom Grace and Salvation is offered in the Gospel, either to accept the same, on the Condition on which it is offered; or not to accept it, refusing to do, when the Consequence depending on their doing or not doing it, is, according to the Tenor of the new Covenant, either their Salvation or Damnation? As in *Mark 16. 15, 16.* This, I say, is what I conceive to be the *great Question* here, and I am content that a due Resolution of this should decide the main Question, which in this Discourse, I have under Consideration.

Now the turning Point here is, Whether the Liberty of reasonable Creatures, in their Actions, will not consist with the Decree and governing Providence of God, in ordering all Events according to his own Pleasure? Or in the Language of Scripture, in *Working all Things after the Counsel of his own Will?* Eph. 1. 11. For if God's decreeing future Events, does not take away the Liberty of subordinate Agents, concerned in the Execution of his Purposes, or their Power of doing or not doing what is done by them, why may not he that believes and is saved be supposed at the same Time to have had Power, his Election notwithstanding, not to have believed: And on the other Hand, he that does not believe, and so perisheth, to have or to have had Power to believe, tho' he did not, and tho' this were according to God's Decree. The Decree does not take away this Power, or rather is not inconsistent with it. However this may seem a Paradox to many; a Creature may have Power to perform an Action which God has decreed he shall not do. This will appear if the Manner of his decreeing what free Agents shall do or not do, be duly considered and understood.

A little to clear up this Point, I shall (1) Shew the pernicious Consequences that will follow upon denying it. (2) Produce some Authorities for it. (3) May briefly shew the same to be in Reason possible.

Now for the *First*, If God's decreeing that his reasonable Creatures shall do, or not do, this or that Action, be inconsistent with a Power or Liberty in them to do the contrary, then it will follow, either that he has not decreed all their Actions, and does not by his Providence order and bring about all those Things which are done by them: Or otherwise, they having no Liberty respecting those Things or Events which God has decreed shall exist, or come to pass by their Means,

they are under an inevitable Necessity of doing whatever Actions are done by them, and have no more Liberty than a Clock or Watch has, that is moved by the Weights and Springs that are the irresistible Cause of its Motion: And so *Hobbs*, who asserted the Necessity of all Things, was in the Right. The Consequence of the first Supposition is, That God does not govern the World, but in some of the most important Concernments of it; lets Things run at Random, according to the Pleasure of fickle and unsteady Agents, contrary to *Eph. 1. 11.* and many other Texts of Scripture that might be alledged. But otherwise, according to the other Hypothesis, Creatures having no Power to govern their own Wills and Actions, are most certainly incapable of being govern'd in a moral Way, by Laws with Sanctions annexed to them, i. e. Rewards promised in Case of Obedience, and Punishments threatned in Case of Disobedience: For why should a Creature be rewarded with Good, or punished with Evil, if he has no more Liberty with Respect to what he does, than a Stone has not to fall, when it is tossed up into the Air? If the Case be so, how should Men's Consciences accuse them, either for doing what they do, or omitting what they do not, which is one great Part of the Punishment of their Sins. The Consequences of both these Suppositions are intolerable; therefore neither of the Hypotheses are to be allowed.

Wherefore,

Secondly, Learned Men avouch, that God's Decrees respecting future Events, are consistent with the Liberty of free Agents, with Relation to what they do in effecting them. Thus that learned and judicious *Assembly of Divines at Westminster*, affirm, in their *Confession*, Chap. 3. Sect. 1. That "tho' God from all Eternity did, by the
" most wise and holy Counsel of his own Will, freely and unchange-
" ably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; yet so (say they) as thereby
" neither is God the Author of Sin, nor is Violence offered to the
" Will of the Creature, nor is the Liberty or Contingency of second
" Causes taken away, but rather established." To this Effect also *Dr. TWISSE*, in his *Treatise of Reprobation*, in Answer to *Hord* and *Mason*, Part 2. Page 63. says, That "whereas we see some Things
" come to pass necessarily, some contingently; so God hath ordained
" that all Things shall come to pass; but necessary Things, necessa-
" rily, contingent Things, contingently, that is avoidably, and with
" a Possibility of not coming to pass: For every University Scholar
" knows this to be the Notion of Contingency." Thus also our *Mr. NORTON*, in his *Orthodox Evangelist*, Page 76. says, "Man
" acts as freely as if there were no Decree, yet as infallibly as if there

" were

“ were no Liberty. Liberty is the Effect of the Decree; so far is
“ the Decree from being a Prejudice to Liberty. ”

But why should I quote any other such Passages? All that are acquainted with the Writings of *Calvinists* know that in this Point they are generally agreed; so that I am not singular with Respect to this Article.

But because I am not willing to content my self with telling my Reader, that there are great Absurdities that follow the Denial of this, and that there are many that affirm it, and think they are bound so to do, how difficult soever it be to conceive of the *Modus* thereof; for this Reason, I say, I shall not content my self to rest here, without endeavouring to say something briefly, for the clearing up of this Point, and shewing the Possibility of the Thing asserted. And here I say,

1. That it seems evident, that it is impossible that any Thing should come to pass, God in no Sense willing it. This, I think, follows as an undeniable Consequence from this Truth, That his Knowledge and Power are infinite, which I take for granted. As I cannot see how it is possible that any Thing should come to pass, without the Knowledge of him, whose Understanding is infinite, and unlimited, so I can no more conceive how any Thing can come to pass without the Will of him whose Power is infinite, he knowing it at the Time when it was done, or about to be done: For suppose it was not done or brought to pass by his own Efficiency, either immediate, or thro' the Instrumentality of some other Agents; yet at least he could have hindred it by his mighty Power, which he would most certainly have done, had he not willed its coming to pass, at least by his *permissive* Will. Now the Will of God that this or that Thing shall come to pass, is what I understand by the Decree.

2. Suppose it be granted, that God decrees some Things by a *permissive Decree* only; and his Providence with Respect to this Accomplishment be correspondent with such a Decree as that is; yet it must be here observed, that *Permission* in God must not be looked upon as merely the not hindring an Event of which we may have an Idea in our Minds; for God does Nothing to hinder the Being of Millions of Worlds, which neither now exist, or ever shall: But how absurd would it be to say, on this Account, he permits their Being. *Permission* in God therefore intends his not hindring Things from coming to pass, which he knows will come to pass, unless he hinders them. And thus divine Permission supposeth God's doing more towards this

or

or that Thing's coming to pass, than barely permitting it in the Manner now expressed.

For, 3. He must at least be such a Cause of it, as without which such a Thing could not come to pass, inasmuch as it never could have come to pass, had he not done several Things that were absolutely necessary in order thereunto; as his making the Agents acting, and giving them Power to act, and exhibiting the Objects about which the Act is conversant, and providentially ordering the Occasions leading to it, and giving that Aid to the Agents, without which they could not do what is done by them: *For in him we live, move and have our Being, Acts 17. 28.* Now all this supposeth that God hath from Eternity decreed thus to do: For whatever God does in Time, he decreed to do from Eternity; and this is much more than barely not hindring a free Agent from doing this or that Act.

4. From God's permitting free Agents thus to act, the Things in this Way brought to pass, will as certainly have a Being as if God decreed to bring them about by a positive Act of his Power. For if he himself does, or decrees to do all that is necessary in order to their Futurition, giving his Creatures all the Power and Aid that is necessary thereunto, administering also the Occasions leading to such Actions or Events, when he knows that his Creatures being put into such a State, and then left to their own free Will, will assuredly act after such a Manner; he does by Consequence will or decree such Actions or Events, as they, not he, are the immediate Efficient and formal Causes of. I say, he that wills to do that on which he certainly knows such an Event will follow, does by Consequence will that Event, tho' he himself neither does the Thing, nor is properly the Cause of another doing it; and tho' the Agent by whom such an Action is done, or such an Effect produced, be at perfect Liberty whether he will do so or not. In this Case the Event will assuredly happen, or the Effect be produced, as if the Agent acting had no Liberty; because God has determined to do, and actually does, that which he knows will be an Occasion (not Cause) of that Agent's so acting.

The certain Futurition of any Events thus necessarily, or rather certainly, consequent on God's permissive Decree, relating to them, does not at all infer a Want of Power or Liberty in the Agents immediately concerned in them, of not acting as they do. If God decrees to do that, on which he knows such an Event will follow, that is, That his Creature having Power so to act, will of its own Accord do

so,

so, the Consequence of this is not, that his Creature has not Power to do otherwise. I think this is as plain as any Thing can be. How should God's Decree to suffer a free Agent to act after such a Manner, infer that Agent's not having Power to forbear so acting?

If it be here said, that it is not possible that even God himself should know what a free Agent will do in a Case wherein he is supposed to have Power to do a Thing or not to do it; I answer, *first*, By asking him that says so, How he knows this? Does he find any such Thing asserted in the holy Scriptures? Or will he say, That a Supposition of God's knowing what a free Agent will do, implies a Contradiction, and so cannot be true. If this be what is intended, I declare my self very far from seeing it to be evident. If a Creature may be supposed to have Power to do that which he does not; or on the other Hand, not to do that which he does; How does it appear that God, whose Understanding is infinite, cannot know whether he will do the Thing or not do it? To suppose, that God may know both that such a Creature will do such an Action, and that he will not do it, would indeed be a plain Contradiction: The Reason is, because both these cannot be true: But to suppose that God may know that such a Creature will do such an Action, tho' that Creature have Power not to do it, when it is a Truth that he will do it, even then when God is supposed to know it, has not, I think, any Appearance of a Contradiction in it.

It was always a Truth, even from Eternity, that Creatures by whom such and such Actions are done in Time, would so do them. If it be true a Minute before a Creature performs an Action, that he will perform it; the same was true an Hour before that, and a Year before that, and so from Eternity: Or did this at any Time begin to be a Truth? Now, how can any Man affirm, that there may be a Truth which God may be, nay, must needs be ignorant of? Let it also be considered, that if God cannot foreknow such Contingencies, then he cannot know of them one Hour before they come to pass. but thus to dispute is to argue against plain Fact: For it is certain that God hath both fore-known and revealed many such Things long before their Accomplishment; as that of *Cyrus* his sending the *Jews* back to their own Land; and that of *Judas's* betraying his Lord and Master, &c. Or had not these Agents Power to forbear doing these Actions? I can shew that Dr. *Twisse*, who was no *Arminian*, affirms this with Respect to *Judas*, and says the same with Respect to Men's sinful Actions in general; yet he truly acknowledgeth that Men can-

not

not exercise Grace in their doing good Actions, or in their forbearing evil ones, till God bestows his Grace upon them.

I think it appears plainly enough, by what has been said in several of the last foregoing Paragraphs, That the Sovereignty of God in decreeing future Events, and bringing them to pass in the Way of his Providence, is no Ways inconsistent with the Liberty of his Creatures.

And this I think well agreeth with the *Assembly of Divines*, in their *Confession of Faith*, Chap. 5. Sect. 2. "Altho' in Relation to the Fore-knowledge and Decree of God, the first Cause, all Things come to pass immutably, and infallibly; yet by the same Providence he ordereth them to fall out according to the Nature of second Causes, either necessarily, freely or contingently." Now this undoubtedly holds true with Respect to God's Decree and Providence relating to Man's eternal State, as well as with any other Thing whatsoever.

I crave Leave in this Place to make a short Digression from what is the proper Design and Business of this Essay, which is not to defend those calvinian Doctrines which I acknowledge, but to establish my own Hypothesis, in those Articles, wherein I differ from most that are in that Scheme.

But having in Page 154. acknowledged the Truth of the Doctrine of Reprobation, as well as that of Election; and being sensible how very tender many serious Souls are, with Respect to the first mentioned of these two Articles; I shall attempt in a very few Words, to take off the seeming Harshness of the Doctrine which I have now named. But let those who own the Doctrine of Election, as it is asserted in *Eph. 1. 4. 5.* and Verse 11. *Rom. 8. 30. Acts 13. 48.* and many other Places; Let such, I say, as believe this Doctrine, consider how this can be true, and the other mentioned be false. How can we suppose it to be a Truth, that God chuseth some of Mankind to eternal Life, and yet not leave the Rest unchosen? How can he be said to chuse any, if he makes no Difference, but takes all? Now, if we acknowledge that God chuseth some of Mankind from among the Rest, to be the Objects of his special Favour, as in the Texts above quoted, this with what is plainly implied in it, and evidently held forth from it, contains the Substance of what they hold, if I do not misunderstand them who maintain the Doctrine of which I am now speaking: And I desire such as are willing to submit to the Authority of God's holy Word, to consider whether as much as this is not plainly held forth in such Texts of Scripture as these, viz. *Jude ver. 4. Rom. 11. 7, 8.* and Chap. 9. 21, 22. Many such Texts might be easily named.

And

And let it be considered that if God does, or ever will, inflict eternal Torment on any of the Children of Men, he must be supposed always to have intended to do so ; for we cannot suppose that God ever did any Thing but what he first purposed or intended to do ; nor can we reasonably think, that God ever purposed or intended to do any Thing, which he did not before purpose. Or can we think that any new Reasons can offer themselves to God, which before he knew not of, to move him to purpose or decree Things which he never before intended to do, or intended should be done ? I hope none have so mean Tho'ts of God, as such an Imagination would imply ! I suppose it undeniable, that whatever God does in Time, he hath purposed to do from Eternity.

For the same Reason that God does any Thing in Time, that is done by him, he always purposed to do it. If therefore, God inflict Pain or Torment on any of the Children of Men, he inflicteth the same for their Sins ; then he eternally purposing to inflict Pain or Torment on them, and always purposed to do this for their Sins, or as a Just Punishment of them.

But if any think it will from hence follow, that Men's Sins are the Cause of God's Decree to punish them, they are herein grossly mistaken : Sin is the Cause of Man's suffering, and the Thing for which God intends he shall suffer ; yet the same cannot be the Cause of God's Act in decreeing : The Reason of which is evident, *viz.* Because the Decree of God, being an eternal and immuent Act of his, cannot be an Effect of any Thing out of himself ; and most evidently it cannot be an Effect of any Thing that is temporal, as Sin is : For how should a Thing that had no Being till very lately, be the Cause of a Thing that had a Being from Eternity. Of God's Actions of this Kind, the Perfections of his own Nature, such as his own perfect Knowledge, Wisdom, Justice, Holiness, which belong to his eternal Power and God-head, can only be the Cause, not the temporary Actions of his Creatures.

What God may justly do in Time, he may justly decree to do from Eternity. If God does nothing in the Execution of his Decrees, which is unjust, he does no Injustice in decreeing : Or can we imagine that God does unjustly in decreeing to do justly ? This would be strange ! Indeed God's eternal Decree does not of itself any Ways affect any of his Creatures. His Decree does not of itself either give them a Being, or work any Effects on them. This is only done by his Efficiency and Providence. If therefore, in and by these, he does

his Creatures no Wrong, he never does them any at all. If God deals fairly by his Creatures in all his Works, or providential Dispensations towards them, they can have no Reason to complain of him as if *his Way was not equal*. When therefore God justifies himself against all the hard Thoughts and wicked Cavils of sinful Men, the Course he takes is to shew the Justice and Equity of all his Actions towards them, and is not wont to dispute with them concerning his eternal Decrees. See these following Texts and others like them, *Ezek. 18. 25, --- 29. Lam. 3. 33, --- 36. Job 34. 11, 12, 23. 24.*

Tho' it be true, that God does nothing but what he first decrees to do, and this even from Eternity ; and as true that God decrees to do nothing but what he does, and that in the very same Manner in which he decreed to do it ; yet no Instances can be given of God's doing any Thing that is unjust or unequal in the Execution of his Decrees. He manages all Things in such a Manner, that Man has not the least Reason to complain of him. That is most true concerning him, in *Deut. 32. 4. He is the Rock, his Work is perfect ; For all his Ways are Judgment : A God of Truth and without Iniquity, just and right is he.*

As God neither will, nor ever designed to torment Men in another Life, save for their Sins, whereby they well deserve the same ; so he never is, nor intended to be, the Cause of those Sins for which he resolved to punish those who he ever knew would deserve it. If God should himself cause Men to commit Sin, it would not stand with his Justice to punish them for it. But no Man can prove, that God was ever the Author of any Sin. To affirm he ever was, is to blaspheme his holy Name. If any have let fall Expressions implying that God is the Author of Sin, they have certainly erred therein : And they who accuse Men with this (as I think, is frequent) when they are not guilty of it, are guilty of grievously wronging them.

They who affirm, That God has from Eternity decreed to permit those Sins to be committed, which he certainly knew would be committed, if he prevented them not, and that he accordingly does permit them, do not hereby make him the Author of Sin. God's suffering his Creatures to Sin, when it is in his Power to hinder them, is not to be the Author of Sin. Nor is God in Justice obliged to exert his Power in hindring Persons from sinning, tho' he knows they will Sin if he does not, and that their Sinning will bring Ruin on them.

But

But if God should lay any of the Children of Men under an absolute and fatal *Necessity* of sinning against him, and then punish them for the Sins they commit, (which I suppose he never does) this would be what I cannot see the *Equity* of: But that *Men* do, by their own voluntary Rebellion, bring such a *Necessity* on themselves, I deny not; and then they may justly suffer for the Sins they commit, or rather for their Crime in bringing themselves into such a bad Condition.

God does not, by his eternal *Decree*, that he will punish these or those Persons in another Life and World, nor in the *Execution* of this Decree of his, lay such Persons under a *Necessity* of sinning against him; tho' in this his Permission of Sin is implied his willing the Being of Sin by his Permission: But this permissive Will of God must not be understood of his Will, as he is *Lawgiver*, by which he wills what should be done, and what should not; but of his Will concerning *Events*, by which he wills what Things shall come to pass, and what shall not, either by his effective Providence, or at least by his suffering them to be done.

CHAP. XX.

That Persons who have long resisted and quenched the Holy Spirit, and so provoked him to depart from them, may at last seek earnestly for Mercy, and not obtain it, no Argument against what I plead for.

HA **T** Sinners are often guilty of resisting and quenching the Holy Spirit of God, and this for a long Time, is here taken for granted; and it is a Truth unto which what was spoken by the holy Martyr Stephen, in *Acts* 7. 51. is a very clear Testimony: *Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in Heart and Ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: As your Fathers did, so do ye.* That in *Isai.* 63. 10. is to the same Purpose; but they have rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit, &c. Also that

in 1 Thes. 5. 17. *Quench not the Spirit*, implies in it the Truth here taken for granted; and there are a great Number of other Texts in which the same Truth is implied.

Now, in all such Texts as these, the *Striving* of the Holy Spirit with Sinners is evidently supposed, even the same that is expressly mentioned, Gen. 6. 3. *My Spirit shall not always strive with Man*. Sinners could not resist the Holy Spirit, if he did not strive with them, or were not engaged in some Design or Work wherein they might be supposed to oppose or resist him.

Now, this Operation or Striving of the Spirit, in which Sinners act in Opposition to him, cannot be justly conceived to be a Striving in the proper and literal Sense of the Word, which implies, a Person's doing all that is in his Power to accomplish a Work, wherein he is engaged; for this is utterly inconsistent with the infinite Power of the Holy Ghost, who is One of the three Persons in the God-head: This must, therefore, be attributed to the Spirit of God, after the Manner of Men, as Things are in Scripture frequently attributed to God. Thus, because the Spirit of God does those Things which have a natural Tendency towards their Conversion and eternal Salvation, he is said to strive with them to that End, tho' he does not all that is in his Power; which, were he a Man or some other created Agent, he might be supposed to do, if he were resisted, and did not accomplish what he attempted.

I must also observe, that the immediate *End* of this Operation of the Spirit, wherein he is supposed to be resisted, and many Times effectually, so that he accomplisheth not what he attempteth, cannot be the *Regeneration* of the Persons he is said to strive with; for this being a Work, to which the infinite Power of God is required, like that by which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the Dead, such a Power must needs be exerted, whenever this Work is attempted; and then there can be no Resistance given to the Holy Spirit therein. The Holy Spirit never fails of accomplishing this, when he sets about it: As the Soul is wholly *passive* in it, so it can make no Resistance against it. When the Spirit works in this Way, none can hinder.

The Work, therefore, of the Holy Spirit which Sinners are supposed to resist and to prevent, is a Work of quite a different Nature from that but now mentioned: A Work in which the Spirit of God acts in a *moral*, not in a *physical* Way (if I may use these Terms) I mean he works in the Way of *moral Suasion*, by offering Matter of Con-
viction

viction and Awakening to those he is said to strive with. He sets proper Arguments and Motives before them, and inculcates the same upon their Mind and Conscience, to persuade and excite them to apply themselves to the Things wherein their everlasting Peace and Welfare is concerned. He useth Means to remove their Prejudices against the Things which he persuades them to, and to stir them up to improve the Powers which they have latent in them, but seem as if they had not, and will never exert, unless they be in this Way assisted. This, I say, is the Way of the Spirit's Working, when he strives with Sinners in order to their Good. And thus he strives with them in a Way, unto the Success of which their own Concurrence and Activity are required; which to the Act of *Regeneration* it is not; tho' in the Work *preparatory* to this it is.

Now, in the Spirit's Striving here intended, I do not suppose what he does by the written and preached Word, only to be included; but doubt not that he also strives with Sinners by instructive and convincing Providences, and sometimes by the Ministry of his holy Angels, and immediate Suggestions; by all which Means, Things are bro't to the Minds of sinful Men, which tend to instruct and excite them to their Duty: But still this is striving with them in a moral Way; not by attempting to create new Powers in them, which they are without. And if the Striving of the Holy Spirit be in the Way now expressed, it is easy to conceive how he may be refused by sinful Men, and his Design and Work frustrated; because Persuasions, properly such, suppose a Power in the Subjects persuaded, either to do or not do the Things they are persuaded to: For to what End is a Person persuaded to do that which he is supposed, either to have no Power to perform, or no Power to let alone; unless the Persuasions used are supposed to give him Power to do the Thing required? And then he is enabled to do it in a *moral* (not a physical) Way, which I willingly allow, *i. e.* he is excited and made willing to do that which he had Power before (in a physical Sense) to perform; but never would have performed (and in the Sense explained could not) without such Persuasions. Thus have I shewed what that Striving of the Spirit of God is, which Sinners are here supposed to resist and quench.

I shall proceed to consider *how* sinful Men *resist* and *quench* the Spirit, in these Operations. And here I shall briefly name some of the principal Ways in which this is done. And,

(1) Sinners resist and quench the Spirit when they will not hearken and attend to what he says to them. All that God says to sinful Men
in

in his written and preached Word, by the Voice of his Providence, and by the Ministry of his Angels; by all which they are put in Remembrance of their many Sins, and the Duties required of them; all these, I say, are the Voice of the Holy Spirit to them, unto whom the Application of Redemption most especially belongs. Now, when Sinners refuse to hear and consider what the Holy Spirit does in these Ways say to them, this is evidently to resist and quench him. By thus refusing to hear the Voice of the Holy Spirit, Sinners refuse to receive Influences and Convictions, the giving of which is the special End of the Spirit's being sent into the World to them, as appears in *John* 16. and 30.

(2) Sinners resist the Spirit of God in their Refusal of the Offers of his Mercy made to them, thro' a Redeemer, by *neglecting the great Salvation* offered to them, as in *Heb.* 2. 3. The Application of that Redemption which has been purchased for sinful Men, does especially belong to the Holy Spirit, as his Work; and to this End he labours with Sinners to prepare and qualify them to be Partakers of it, and make them willing to go to Jesus Christ for the Benefits offered to them: He calls, invites and persuades them to do so. Now, when they refuse to obey those Calls, they in this, in a very especial Manner, resist and quench the Holy Spirit of God. This especially was the Sin with which the *Jews* were charged. *John* 5. 40. *Ye will not come to me, that ye might have Life.* The like we have in *Matth.* 23. 37. The same Sin is called a *doing Despite to the Spirit of Grace*: Because the Tendency of the Influences of the Holy Spirit, in the Work of common Grace, is to bring Sinners to an Acceptance of the Saviour, and Salvation offered to them, in which Work of his, they wickedly resist him. See *Heb.* 10. 29.

Sinners may especially be looked upon as Resisters of the Holy Spirit, in this Work of his, when they fall away after he has wrought a very considerable Change on them, has actually done a great deal for them, in order to their being made Partakers of the special Mercies offered to them in the new Covenant, and so brought them very *nigh to the Kingdom of God*, as that Scribe was, *Mark* 12. 34. This I take to be the very Case supposed in *Ezek.* 18. 24, 26. and *Heb.* 6. 4, 5, 6. and 2 *Pet.* 2. 20. and in *Heb.* 10. 38, 39. which Places I only here refer my Reader to.

But most of all do Sinners resist and quench the Spirit of God, when the Opposition which they give to him and his Work, is with

PART II.
CHAP. XX.
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an Intent to reproach and dishonour him, and the gracious Design wherein he is engaged. This seems to be the Crime (or the great Aggravation of the Crime) of the Scribes and Pharisees, when they said, *Doth not this Fellow, (meaning our Lord) cast out Devils by Beelzebub the Prince of Devils?* Matth. 12. 24. And so in Mark 3. 22. it is said, *The Scribe which came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the Prince of the Devils casteth he out Devils.* And the Blasphemy, for which they are spoken of as in Danger of eternal Damnation, is thus described in Verse 30. *Because, said they, he hath an unclean Spirit.*

(3) Sinners resist the Holy Spirit by obstinately rebelling against him, and refusing to do what he requires of them. Of Sinners thus resisting the Spirit of God we have an Account in such Texts of Scripture as Isai. 63. 10. *But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit: Therefore he was turned to be their Enemy, and fought against them.* Jer. 2. 25. and Chap. 44. 16. *As for the Word thou hast spoken unto us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee.*

Especially when Persons sin against Light and Knowledge, they are guilty of resisting and quenching the Spirit of God. When it notwithstanding Men are by the Holy Spirit convinced, that such and such Actions are evil and provoking in God's Sight, yet they will do them; in this they greatly sin against the Holy Ghost. Of this Kind of Sin our Saviour speaketh, John 15. 22. *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had Sin: But now they have no Cloak for their Sins.*

And now that the Spirit of God does sometimes utterly withdraw from Persons who have long resisted him in the Instances above expressed, is what I am here next to shew; and the same is most manifestly held forth in Gen. 6. 3. *And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with Man, for that he also is Flesh.* Which Words are well explained by the Apostle Peter, in his first Epistle, Chap. 3. Ver. 18, 19, 20. *For Christ also hath once suffered for Sins, the Just for the Unjust, (that he might bring us to God) being put to Death in the Flesh, but quickned by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the Spirits in Prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the Long-suffering of God waited in the Days of Noah, while the Ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is eight, Souls were saved by Water.* Thus the Spirit of God departed from Saul, 1 Sam. 16. 14. And thus David prayed, that the holy Spirit of God might not be taken from

from him, when probably he tho't himself unconverted : *Psal. 51. 11.* As for God's true Saints, he hath promised that he will never take his holy Spirit from them. *Isa. 59. 20, 21. Jer. 32. 38, 39, 40.*

There are other Texts of Scripture, wherein the final Withdrawing of the Spirit of God from some, who long resist and rebel against him, is very evidently implied : Such as that, *Psal. 81. 11, 12. But my People would not hearken to my Voice : And Israel would none of me. So I gave them up unto their own Hearts Lusts : And they walked in their own Counsels.* With this Place compare these following, *1 Chron. 28. 9. 2 Chron. 15. 2. Ezek. 24. 13. Rev. 22. 11.* When God wholly and forever gives up any Sinners to their own Heart's Lusts, resolving that he will let them follow the Devices and Counsels of their own wicked Hearts, his thus taking his Spirit forever from them, is therein most evidently implied : And what the dreadful Consequences of this are, comes next in order to be considered.

Now, when God deals thus with any of the rebellious Children of Men, they are undone, and that forever : It is then impossible to *renew them again to Repentance*, as in *Heb. 6. 6.* When the Spirit of God has utterly forsaken them, there then *remains no more Sacrifice for their Sins* ; they having trodden under Foot the Blood of the Son of God, and therein *done Despite to the Spirit of Grace*, as in *Heb. 10. 26, --- 29.* This is a *Sin unto Death*, which we are required to pray for the Pardon of. It is impossible that the Sin of such Persons should ever be pardoned : And at present I see no Reason but that it may be the same *Sin against the holy Ghost*, that is spoken of in *Matth. 12. and Mark. 3.* I suppose the Sin in those Places intended, to consist no less in the Enmity of Men's Hearts against the holy Spirit, and the Work he is engaged in, and the Resistance they give to him in it, than in the Words they utter against him : And I am far from agreeing with a certain Author, who thinks the Sin intended in these Places cannot be committed without Men's pronouncing those blasphemous Words here spoken of. Perhaps such malicious Speeches are rather to be looked upon as a plain Indication of the Persons guilty of the horrendous Crime, by our Saviour pronounced unpardonable, than as that, in which the intended Sin does either wholly or principally consist. And if this be the Truth of the Case, I suppose none can be known by others to have committed the mentioned Sin, except such Blasphemers as our Saviour describes : And I believe that Sinners cannot ordinarily in this Life know that they have sinned unpardonably.

In

In this, I think, I well agree with the Learned Mr. How, in his *Redeemer's Tears*, which Book I have not now by me.

Indeed none have committed that Sin which is unpardonable, but those from whom the Spirit has finally withdrawn himself, or is about so to do ; and it is certain, that all such are guilty of an unpardonable Sin : And the Reason why it is impossible such Sinners should ever obtain a Pardon, is, because the Spirit of God has utterly forsaken them, and will never return to them again ; and on this Account it is impossible they should ever be *renewed again to Repentance*, as in *Heb. 6. 6.* In which Clause it is implied, that they once had a *Repentance* which they have lost, and fallen from, but not of the same Kind which the Regenerate only have ; for those who have that never fall away, as those do spoken of in the Place referred to, *Heb. 6. 6.* Nor can Persons be such Apostates in whom common Grace, which implies Repentance of a lower Kind than that of the Regenerate, has never been wrought. But the Spirit does not bring all with whom he strives unto this Length, which is the same with that described, *2 Pet. 2. 20.* without attaining unto which Persons may provoke the Spirit of God to leave them : But I think that ordinarily such cannot know that the Spirit of God will no more strive with them.

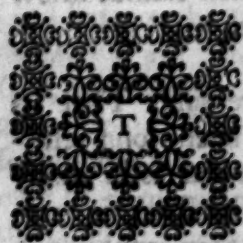
I shall have finished this Chapter, when I have said, That its being a Truth, that the Spirit of God having been long resisted by wicked Men, may at last thus leave them (as is in many Scriptures implied) so that hereupon their Destruction is unavoidable, can be no Evidence that before this they could not comply with the Terms of the new Covenant. If now they are given up to their own Heart's Lusts, so that they cannot do this, it followeth not that they could never have done it. If now *the Things of their Peace are hidden from their Eyes*, it does not thence appear, that they always were so ; nay, the contrary is plainly implied in the Words alluded to. If now God will not hear their Cries to him for Mercy, as in *Prov. 1. 24.* it followeth not, that he never would have heard them, if they would have called on him : The contrary is plainly implied in the Place quoted. If Sinners will not *seek the Lord while he may be found*, and *call upon him while he is near* ; no Wonder if he will not hear their Cries, when the Day of his Patience is at an End. Nor can Sinners seek the Lord after their Day of Grace is ended, as they might have done, while he was striving with them by his Word and Spirit. They now, indeed, cry for Deliverance when they feel the Terrors of the Almighty seizing on their Souls, as in *Prov. 1. 26, 27.*
Y
which

which Cries are nothing like the Prayers of Sinners, tho' unregenerate, while under sensible *Encouragements* from the Invitations of the Gospel, and while God says to them, as in 2 Cor. 6. 2. *Now is the accepted Time; now is the Day of Salvation.* After the Door of God's Mercy is shut (tho' here in this World) Sinner's Cries for Deliverance from the Torments which they may suffer, are of the same Kind with those of the Wicked after this Life is at an End, *Luke 13. 25; 26.* and *Matth. 25. 10, 11.*



CHAP. XXI.

Wherein the Power of Man, with Relation to the Condition on which Salvation is offered to him in the Gospel, is further considered.



H O' my Tho'ts with Respect to the Point here proposed to further Consideration, have, I hope, been in some tolerable Measure manifested, so that I tho't not to have added any Thing further; yet that I may not fail of being understood, with Respect to this important Article, I shall endeavour more fully to explain and confirm what I hold.

I think I have sufficiently proved in Part II. Chap. V. of this Essay, that neither the Grace of Regeneration, nor any Act implying it, can be the Condition on which Salvation is offered in the Gospel; and consequently if Salvation be conditionally offered, as I have shewed it is, Part I. Chap. IV. the Condition required is not performed by Virtue of any Power received in our Regeneration, that, in Order of Nature, following our Faith and Justification. It is therefore here supposed, that the Power by which any Sinner *believeth unto Righteousness*, as in *Rom. 10. 10.* be that Power what it will, and however the Sinner comes by it, is such a Power as the Sinner may, and must have before he is *born again*, or *born of the Spirit*.

Nor is there any Doubt here, whether this Power is given to Man by God, *from whom every good and perfect Gift cometh down*, *Jam. 1.*

17. tho' it may be very reasonably enquired in what Way and Manner God gives this Power, and whether he gives it only to such as when they have it use it well, and so actually comply with the Terms on which Salvation is offered to them.

That Sinners may have Power to do that which is never actually done by them, I know not of any that will deny, with whom I am any Ways likely to be concerned. I shall therefore take it for granted, That it is possible for Persons to do some Things which it is in their Power to avoid; and also not to do some Things which they have the Power to perform.

The Question therefore here is only respecting the Power of performing the Condition on which Salvation is offered to Sinners; and this Inquiry can only here relate to those Sinners that never accept of Salvation on the Terms of the new Covenant; for as for such as do accept of it, they certainly have a Power some Way or other to do so.

I shall then here enquire, whether such as will not, and so do not, come to Jesus Christ for Life, in the Manner required of them in order to their being saved, do fail of doing this for want of a Power necessary to that End. And let it be remembred that I here speak of such only as enjoy the Means of Salvation, the Grace of God spoken of in 2 Cor. 6. 1. And the Question here is not, whether Sinners can believe to the saving of their Souls, without Aid and Assistance from God; but whether they might not do so, having such Means and Helps as many have, who yet never comply with the Terms of the Gospel, and so perish for ever.

Nor do I by that Aid and Assistance which I suppose necessary in this Case, intend such only as consist in external Means; as the Word of God written and preached, the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, instructive and awakening Providences, &c. But besides these I suppose there is necessary unto a Sinner's doing what is required of him in the Gospel, the Aids and Influences of God's holy Spirit to move and excite him to the Things required of him, by bringing his Duty to his Remembrance, and his Obligations to perform it; also by putting him in Mind of his Sins and the Calls given him in the Word of God to repent of them, and turn from them, and lay hold on the great Saviour provided for him, &c.

These Motions and Influences of the holy Spirit, have all of them a Relation to the Things required of Man in the holy Scriptures, and not to Things which are not therein prescribed ; and are intended by the *Strivings of God's Spirit*, of which we read, *Gen. 6. 3.* and which the Wicked *resist* (*Acts 7. 31.*) and *quench*, (*1 Thes. 5. 19.*) and whom they are said in so doing to *vex* and *grieve*, *Isai. 63. 10.* *Eph. 4. 30.*

In these Motions and Influences of the holy Spirit which I here speak of, I confess I conceive he acts in a moral, rather than a physical Manner, *viz.* by instructing, reproving, exhorting, and persuading, &c. and not by creating any new Powers in Men's Souls ; but by doing what is necessary on his Part in order to his moving and exciting Men to the Performance of their Duty ; and so rendring them the more inexcusable if they engage not in it.

However these Motions of the Spirit being such as Persons may enjoy, and yet never be savingly converted, they are quite of a different Nature from those Operations of the Spirit of God, by which the great Work of Regeneration is effected, nor are they designed to the same End as these last mentioned are ; but to excite Sinners to the Duties that are preparatory to a Work of saving Grace on their Souls, a Work like that which was wrought in Christ, when God raised him from the Dead, (*Eph. 1. 20.*) and by which we are said to be *created anew in Christ Jesus unto good Works*, *Eph. 2. 10.*

Now the great Question here is, Whether when Sinners are under such a Work of God's Spirit, with the external Means afforded to such as enjoy the Gospel, and yet do not come to Christ for Life ; whether, I say, these remain, being under such Advantages, without any Power to believe to the saving of their Souls ?

Now if this be affirmed by any, I confess I cannot agree with them in their Sentiments.

But for preventing Mistakes in this important Article, I shall here distinguish of Impotency, which is two-fold ; and each of these Kinds does suppose there may be a Power opposite to it. The Kinds of Impotency I here intend are by some, if I mistake not, called *natural* and *moral*. I shall speak of these two Kinds of Impotence according to the Notion I my self have of them.

And

And *first*, By what I call a natural Impotence, I intend such an Inability to do a Thing, as renders the Thing utterly impossible to be done by a Person without having a new Power or Powers given to him. Thus it is properly said of a blind Man, that he cannot see; and of a deaf Man, that he cannot hear: And thus I acknowledge that it may be truly said of a Person in a State of Nature; not being born of the Spirit, that he cannot perform any Actions that are truly spiritual or holy. This is as impossible as it is for a *Thorn-Bush* to bear *Figs*, or for a *Bramble-Bush* to bear *Grapes*, *Luke* 6. 44. Nothing less than changing the Nature of a Tree will render it capable of this. And thus he that is utterly destitute of saving Grace, cannot bring forth any Fruits of Holiness, till he is savingly renewed and made a new Creature, *Eph.* 2. 10. No Arguments, Motives, or Persuasions can give Power to a Man in this Sense unable to do a Thing, to perform it.

But then, *secondly*, There is another Kind of Impotency, which arises only from Error in Men's Judgments, and Obstinacy in their Wills; and this does in some Sort disable Persons from doing some Things which otherwise they might do, were their Prejudices removed. However it may not be unfitly said of Persons under such Disadvantages, that they cannot for the present do this or that Thing, which they have an Aversion to, when yet such Persons want not a natural Power to perform what they are said to be unable to do. Thus when a Man is persuaded that his doing this or that which he is urged to, will prove hurtful and injurious to him, it may be said, that at present he cannot do it, *i. e.* he cannot find in his Heart a Willingness to engage in doing that which he thinks will rather hurt him than do him good: Or if he thinks he might obtain some Benefit by doing the Thing, yet thinks the Advantages he might reap by it will not countervail the Difficulties he must undergo in that Self-denial which is requisite in order to it, he cannot bring himself to a Willingness to do it.

Persons are in Scripture in this Sense sometimes spoken of as unable to do this, that or the other Thing, which yet really they want not a natural Power to perform. Thus it is said of *Joseph's* Brethren, that they hated him so, that they could not speak peaceably of him, (*Gen.* 37. 4.) Such Impotence as this is plainly spoken of by our Saviour, and the Nature of it unfolded in *Luke* 11. 5, 6, 7, 8. He said unto them, Which of you shall have a Friend, and shall go unto him at Midnight, and shall say unto him, Friend, Lend me three Loaves; for a Friend of mine is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him: And he from within shall

shall answer, and say, *Trouble me not; the Door is now shut, and my Children are with me in Bed; I cannot rise to give thee.* I say unto you, tho' he will not rise to give him because he is his Friend; yet because of his Importunity he will rise, and give him as many as he needeth. Note here, *I cannot rise to give thee*, in the latter End of Verse 7, is nothing more than, *he will not*, Verse 8. And this which he would not, he is by and by supposed to do. The same Kind of Impotency is pleaded in Excuse for not going to the great Gospel-Feast, Luke 14. 20. *I have married a Wife, and therefore I cannot come.* And our Saviour himself acknowledges this Sort of Impotency in some Men with Respect to their believing in him, John 5. 44. *How can ye believe which receive Honour one of another, and seek not the Honour that cometh from God only?* This Kind of Impotency is not an absolute and utter Inability to do the Thing which Men are sometimes said to be unable to do. This is often made evident by Persons actually doing what they have alledged themselves to have no Power for. Their *could not*, being indeed no more than this, that they *would not*, and not their being utterly unable to do the Thing intended. This is a Sort of *Cannot* which may be cured by good Instructions and Arguments which yet properly give no new Power; and Men may help themselves against this Sort of Inability by reasoning themselves out of their Prejudices against the Things, which they and others may imagine they have no Power to do; so that they may see it was not Want of Power, but Want of a Will, that hindred them from doing as they should.

In the Sense now explained I acknowledge, that some cannot come to Christ for Life, and never will, except the Father draw them, as in John 6. 44. But then our Lord himself shews wherein this Inability consists. John 5. 40. *Ye will not come to me, that ye might have Life*; and Matth. 23. 37. *How often would I have gathered thy Children together, even as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, and ye would not.* It would, in my Opinion, be very improper to charge Men's not coming to Christ merely on their wilful Rebellion, if a real Inability were the Cause of it.

If it be here said to be true of all that do not come to Christ for Life, that, in a strict and proper Sense, they have no Power so to do, I must crave Leave to dissent from this, 'till I can see otherwise than at present I can do.

And

And I shall only here insist a little more fully on one Argument against what I here oppose. I desire to know what Kindness it is to any Sinner, that he has an Offer of Salvation made to him in the Gospel, if he have no Power given to him to accept of that Offer. What Kindness is it to a Person that he has Tidings of a Saviour, and is promised that he shall be saved by him, on this Condition that he believeth on him, when, this notwithstanding, God never did nor ever will give him any Power to believe? Especially supposing that if he does not believe, he shall be punished with a much sorer Punishment than he should have been, if he had never had an Offer of eternal Life made to him; which will be the Case of such as enjoy the Gospel, and yet do not believe, *Matth. 10. 15.* I confess I think that God is much more merciful unto such as never have any Offer of Life, than he is to those who have an Offer on such Terms.

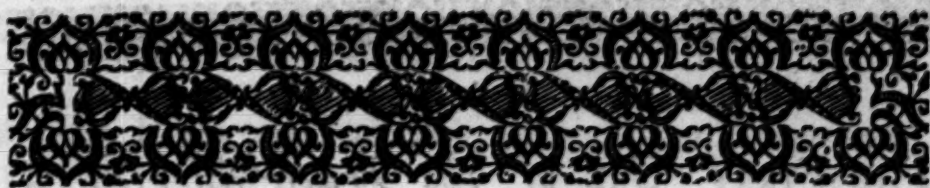
And yet is it not a Truth, that all who enjoy the Gospel of Christ, severally considered, are bound to bless God that he has sent his Son into the World to redeem them, and sent his Gospel to invite them to believe in him, that so they may have eternal Life thro' him? If it be said, that no Man unto whom the Offer of Salvation is made does know any Thing to the contrary but that he is one of God's Elect, and so shall sooner or later be enabled to believe on the Son of God, and obtain Life thro' his Name; I answer, that if he knew he was so, he would be bound to praise God for such an invaluable Mercy; but since he does not know whether he is one of these or not, he does not know whether he have any Cause to give Thanks to God for the Offer of Salvation or no; and God does not require us to give him Praise for supposed Favours, which we neither do nor can know we have received: Nay rather, to do this would be to mock him. And it seems as if it would be to mock us, if he should make a great Shew of Kindness to us when he really shews us no Favour, as indeed, according to the Principle opposed, I affirm, he shews none to those unto whom he gives no Power to accept of the Mercy which he seems graciously to offer to them. But God forbid, that I should have any such hard Thoughts of him, as to think that he offers Salvation to Sinners, and threatens them with a double Damnation in Case they perform not the Condition on which that Offer is made; and yet neither gives nor offers them any Power by which they may perform the Condition of that (to all Appearance) most gracious Offer.

If it be here demanded, what Mercy it is in God to make an Offer of eternal Life to such Sinners as he certainly knows will never accept
of

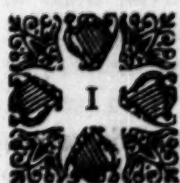
of it; but will, notwithstanding such an Offer, perish forever: To this I answer, that the Kindness of God in the Offers which he makes of his everlasting Mercies, must be judged of according to the Nature of the Condition on which he offers them, and not according to the Events following such Offers, and his Knowledge of those Events. What if Sinners never accept the Benefits offered, and God knew they would not when he offered his Favours to them; (as it is impossible that he should not know what they would do) yet supposing the Offers to be made upon reasonable Terms, such as Sinners may comply with if their own wilful Obstinacy does not hinder them, his Kindness in such Offers is manifest. If this be not granted it will follow, that God shews no Kindness in the Offers of Salvation which he makes to any others besides those that are eventually saved. But who dares thus to affirm: And I can hardly think any Man will affirm, that it is a Kindness in God to offer Salvation to any Sinner without ever giving him Power to accept of it.

But some seem to fear that the Doctrine I plead for, is not calculated to *hide Pride from Man*, and keep him humble. Unto which I say, (1) That I do not think that any Doctrine is well adapted to make and keep Men humble which is contrary to Truth, which I suppose the Doctrine I oppose to be. (2) I would ask which of these two Doctrines has the greatest Tendency to make and keep Men humble, *viz. First*, this, That if any Sinner that has the Offer of Salvation made to him does continue in his Unbelief, and so perisheth, the Reason of this is, because the Condition on which God offered to save him was wholly above his Power, and such as he could not possibly comply with: Or, *Secondly*, this, that if any Sinner fails of that Salvation which he has an Offer of in the Gospel, the Reason is not, because he is utterly unable to accept of it on Gospel Terms; but because his Obstinacy is such that he will not, unless God out of his distinguishing Grace does more for him than he ever does for any Sinner that continues in his Unbelief, and so perisheth. This last is what I maintain: the former is what I oppose. What I affirm tends both to humble and encourage Sinners; what I oppose tends greatly to discourage them, rather than to humble them.





P A R T III.



COME now to the third and last Part of my Essay, which is to shew,

That the Doctrine maintained in the two former Parts of it, is a Truth of very great Importance, and many Ways useful.

If now it be demanded of me (as by some it has been) what the Advantages are of insisting so much on the Hypothesis I endeavour to defend; and what will be gained by it, if the Truth of it were granted to me; I unto this answer, *Much every Way.*

I presume there is no Truth that is asserted in Scripture, and which can be well defended by the Oracles of God, but what may have very profitable Inferences or Conclusions drawn from it: And much more may this be asserted concerning a Truth so abundantly affirmed in the Gospel of our Salvation, and interwoven with all the Parts of it, as that is which I suppose I have now sufficiently defended.

I shall, therefore, now proceed to instance in some of the Advantages we gain by admitting of it; and to shew what useful Inferences it yields to us; and this I will endeavour in the following Chapters.

CHAP. I.

THE FIRST USE of the Truth asserted, is,
That it gives Light to many Texts of
Scripture, which cannot be well understood
without it.

To instance in some of them.

1. ***** HERE are several Texts of Scripture, in which
***** it is plainly affirmed, That *Jesus Christ died for*
***** *all.* Heb. 2. 9. That by the Grace of God he
***** *should taste Death for every Man.* 1 John 2. 2.
***** *He is the Propitiation for our Sins : And not for*
***** *ours only, but for the Sins of the whole World ;*
***** *with which that well agreeth, Isai. 53. 6. All*
we like Sheep have gone astray : We have turned every one to his own Way,
and the Lord hath laid on him the Iniquity of us all. We have also the
same Thing, in effect, asserted by our Saviour himself, John 3. 16.
God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever
believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting Life. I know that
many of our Divines endeavour to give such an Exposition of these
Places and others like them, as to reconcile them to their own Op-
inion of Christ's dying for the *Elect only* : But my Design is not to
consider the Weight and Strength of what they say to this Purpose.
However, I know that all they can do or say, does not satisfy me
and many others. And several who were no *Arminians* have endea-
voured to maintain this as a sacred Truth, That *Jesus Christ died for*
the whole World of Mankind ; who yet have maintained the Ne-
cessity of special Grace, in order to the Conversion and Salvation of
the *Elect of God* : And with these I agree, supposing they mean,
(1) That none will ever savingly believe in Christ, and so obtain eter-
nal Life, for whom God does no more than he does for those that
never so believe. (2) That without an Act of his special Grace, and
of his mighty Power, such as none but the *Elect* have experience of,
none are, or ever can be, regenerated or born again : But if those who

go this Way deny that any besides the Elect have that Grace given them, by the Help whereof they may comply with, or perform, the Condition on which Salvation is offered to them, not being without a Power by which they may do it, I can by no Means agree with them. By Grace I here intend such as is meant, and to be understood in 2 Cor. 6. 1. and *Isai.* 5. 4.

To what End can we suppose Jesus Christ should lay down his Life to purchase Salvation for any, so far forth that they might be saved on some Condition proposed to them in the Gospel, (as he has indeed done, *John* 3. 16. & *John* 4. 9, 10.) without a Supposition of their having Power given them to perform that Condition? What Advantage has any Sinner by this, that he may be saved, if he believe and repent, or perform such or such a Condition, when he neither is, nor ever will be, enabled to perform it? For such must as certainly and unavoidably perish, as they should have done if Christ had not died for them. I therefore suppose their Principles to be altogether inconsistent, who hold, that Christ died for all, and yet deny that God gives Power to any besides the Elect, to perform the Condition on which Salvation is offered to all, unto whom the Gospel is preached. And I would here ask any One who thinks he can vindicate this Principle of Dr. TWISSE in particular, “*That Christ died for all, i. e. to purchase Salvation for them on this Condition, that they believe and repent,*” who yet hold, as I suppose he did, That the Faith and Repentance to this End required of Sinners is of that Kind which is given in Regeneration; and which no Man can have ’till he is born again; (because none but the Regenerate can believe and repent) how these Things can consist one with the other?

But now, on the Hypothesis which I have endeavoured to defend, Christ not only obtained this Advantage for Sinners, that they might be saved on the Condition of the gospel Covenant, but also obtained that Grace for them, by which they should be enabled to perform that Condition. But then the Condition required, according to my Principles, is not this, that they savingly change their own Hearts, and become regenerate Saints; but that they, in a suitable Manner, seek to God to do this for them; and yet in such a Manner, as with his Help they may, before they are new Creatures.

And thus I account for what is affirmed in those Texts of Scripture, where Jesus Christ is said to have *died for all Men*, without denying what is plainly asserted in them: And I am glad that on my Principles I am not obliged to depart from the literal Sense of such Texts.

Again 2. There are in several Texts of Scripture, so far as I can see, as plain *conditional* Promises of *converting Grace*, as can in Words well be expressed; some of which Places I have already considered and vindicated in this Discourse; as *Prov.* 1. 22, 23. and Chap. 2. 3, 4, 5. *Jam.* 1. 5. *Luke* 11. 13. and others. But such as are fixed in this Principle, That God has not promised to give his holy Spirit to any Person, on Condition of his doing any Thing that is possible for a Sinner to do, before he is actually converted, and endowed with the Grace of Regeneration, seem to me to be at a great Loss how to account for what is said in several such Promises. Thus when God promises to give *true spiritual Wisdom* to those that *cry after it, lifting up their Voices for it, seeking it as Silver, and searching for it as for hid Treasure*, as in *Prov.* 2. 2, 3, 4, 5. before mentioned; the Meaning of this Place is commonly said to be, that God will give more spiritual Wisdom to such as are already spiritually wise, which such Seekers are already supposed to be. Now this Place thus explained, is not allowed to be a Direction to such as are yet destitute of saving Grace or Holiness, (the Wisdom intended in it) what Course they should take, in order to their obtaining it; (which yet is the plain Design of the Words from Verse 1. to the 6th.) but only to shew such as are already spiritually wise, how they may become yet wiser.

For my Part I dare not so expound this Place, and several others like it; and I believe none else would, were it not for a præ-conceived Opinion, that a Principle of saving Grace is not on any Condition offered and promised to Sinners: Which Opinion I know no solid Ground for. Whereas on the other Hand, on the Principle by me received, all such Places may be taken and understood according to the plain and literal Sense of them; and we need not be put to any Difficulty to account for the Meaning of them: And I can assure my Reader, I have met with pious and learned Men, who have declared to me, what Difficulty they have been put to about the Meaning of such Places; and who have declared their Satisfaction in the same Account of them that has now been given.

I shall instance in one other Sort of Texts, which, I think, cannot be understood without allowing my Hypothesis to be true: I mean such Texts as require *Perseverance*, as a necessary Condition of Man's Salvation, or such special Mercies as imply Salvation in them, to such as persevere, *Matth.* 10. 22. and Chap. 24. 13. *He that endureth to the End, shall be saved.* We have the same in Effect, *Luke* 13. 13. The same Thing is implied in *Hosea* 6. 3. *Gal.* 6. 9. and I doubt not

not also in *Heb.* 10. 25,-----30. I cannot think that the Meaning of these, and such like Texts, is this, That if such as are *Believers*, in the strictest Sense of this Word, *i. e.* such as are born of God, and become *new Creatures*, do not fall from their Faith, and become *Unbelievers*, and again *Unregenerate*, then they shall inherit eternal Life. Such as these have sufficient Assurance given, that they are in no Danger of such an Apostacy, as appears in *John* 5. 24. *Rom.* 8. 1. *Jer.* 32. 38, 39, 40. *John* 10. 27, 28, 29. *1 Pet.* 1. 2,-----5. and in many other Places, as those with whom I dispute do acknowledge. *Calvinists* maintain that justifying Faith, by which the Elect of God receive Jesus Christ and all his saving Benefits, is but one Act; that a Sinner does no sooner begin to believe with Faith of that Kind, than he is perfectly justified and firmly entitled to all the everlasting Mercies which are offered in the new Covenant; and that in this Covenant, even his Perseverance, and his being made perfect in Holiness, is firmly promised, so that there is no Possibility that any such should fall away and eternally perish.

Now, how incongruous would it be to tell Persons in such a State as this, that they shall be saved, if they do not fall from Grace, relapsing again into that Estate, which they were in before they were born of the Spirit! I think nothing could be more absurd. I therefore conclude, that the mentioned Texts can have no such Meaning. They cannot be intended as Cautions to regenerate Persons, against a total and final Apostacy, they having already fully complied with the Terms, on which the whole of their Salvation is secured to them, in the Covenant of Grace.

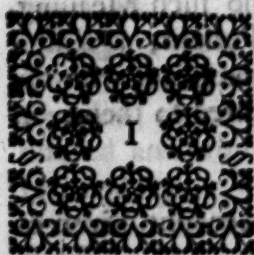
But now, on my Hypothesis, there may be a fair Account given of all such Texts as these mentioned: For, according to that, I freely acknowledge a Person may have the same Kind of Faith which is the Condition of the new Covenant, and yet be still in an unregenerate and unjustified State; because the Covenant I speak of does not only comprise in it the Condition of it, Men's beginning to act such a Kind of Faith: So that believing for a Moment should be sufficient to entitle the Sinner to the same Mercies of that Covenant: This, according to the Tenor of the new Covenant, will not answer the End: But the Condition of it includes this also in it, that the Sinner that would be saved in the Way it prescribeth, must persevere and go on to believe, during the whole of that Term of Time which God, according to his good Will and Pleasure, has allotted for his Probation, in order to his securing his eternal Happiness; which how long it may be, God does not ordinarily reveal to those unto whom he grants it,

it, but keeps it in his own Power ; yet will he be mindful of his Covenant, and take Care to fulfill that Word of his, on which he has given us Reason to depend, Gal. 6. 9. *Let us not be weary in well-doing ; for in due Season we shall reap, if we faint not.* With which Words many other Texts very well agree, such as those last mentioned, and Luke 18. Beginning. And then God fulfills such Promises unto those who wait for his Salvation, when he pardoneth their Sins, and poureth out his holy Spirit on them, as in Acts 2. 39. Prov. 1. 23. Luke 11. 13.



CHAP. II.

THE SECOND USE of the Truth maintained,
*That it renders the Offers of Salvation
made to Sinners in the Gospel, very plain
and intelligible.*



It is very necessary that the Gospel, and the Offers of it made to sinful Men, should be very plain, and easily understood. Mankind in their lapsed State, unto whom the Offers of Salvation by a Redeemer are here supposed to be made, are in a State of Darkness. That is their Character, Eph. 4. 18. *Having their Understanding darkned, being alienated from the Life of God, thro' the Ignorance that is in them, because of the Blindness of their Heart.* They are not only exceeding backward to believe, but are also dull of understanding the Things that belong to their eternal Peace and Welfare, however clearly they are proposed to them : How then should they understand them, if they are not clearly and intelligibly proposed ? And it seems to me, that the common Way of Preaching the Gospel, is somewhat defective in this Respect : The Way is not made so plain as it should be. Now I hope that if the Doctrine I plead for be admitted as true, the Way of Salvation by a Redeemer will be made much the plainer.

There are two great Difficulties that the apostate Children of Men labour under ; one of them is that State of Guilt, in which they are,
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in Respect of which they are all, without Exception, *Children of Wrath*, Eph. 2. 3. Gal. 3. 10. The other is that Corruption of their Nature, unto which, by the Fall, they have been made subject; and which in the Way of Propagation, has been conveyed from Parent to Child, even to all descending from *Adam*, in the Way of natural Generation, from Age to Age, ever since the Beginning of the World: For *Adam*, our moral Head and Representative, having sinned against God in eating the forbidden Fruit, God was so provoked with him that he took his Holy Spirit from him, and deprived him of his Image, as was declared in Part I. Chap. I. And all his Posterity ever since, being liable to the penal Consequences of his Apostacy, have been brought into the World in the like miserable State, with Natures depraved as his was. Hence such Texts as these, *Psal.* 51. 5. & 58. 3. also *Isai.* 48. 8. *Rom.* 5. 12. and Verse 19. Now while this Corruption remains, Men are incapable of Happiness by a Sight of God, and Communion with him, as the Scriptures abundantly declare, *Jahn* 3. 3. and Verse 5. with which Places that well agreeth, *1 Cor.* 2. 9, 10. and Verse 14, 15. and *Matth.* 5. 8. Nor can such unclean Persons enter into the Kingdom of Glory, *Rev.* 21. 27.

Now, that the Gospel may afford sufficient Relief to Sinners with Relation to both these Difficulties which they are under, it seems needful it should afford a Remedy in Respect of both; and I suppose it does so, by offering Deliverance from one, as well as the other of them, without which it is impossible such miserable Sinners should be made happy.

Let us now consider, whether this be really done in the common Way of Preaching the Gospel; and whether it be not done in the Way which, according to my Principles, it ought to be.

First then, according to the common and allowed Way of Preaching the Gospel, there is only supposed to be an Offer of Pardon or Justification made to Sinners, with such other Benefits as are supposed to follow thereon; such as Peace with God, Adoption, Growth in Grace, Perseverance in it, and eternal Glory in the heavenly World: But there is no Offer supposed to be made to Sinners, of Regeneration, or a new Heart and a new Spirit, or of the restoring God's Image to them; which is a Mercy they as much need as the others mentioned. It is supposed that God does not, on any Terms, offer to do this for them: Nay, it is earnestly disputed that he does not. They are, indeed, told that God may do this for them, and that there are Reasons for them to hope for this; but conditional Promise

Promise they have none, on which they may ground such Hope: Nor can they do any Thing, but sin and provoke God, 'till this be first done for them; and so, I think, nothing that has any Tendency to prevail with God to grant them this Mercy.

And whereas such Sinners are frequently said to have an Offer of Salvation made to them, this Salvation must still be understood to comprise no more in it, than the Benefits mentioned in the last Paragraph. To be sure it is not supposed to imply the Grace of Regeneration in it; which I take to be one of the most eminent Parts of the Salvation of sinful Men.

Let us a little consider how Justification, Adoption, &c. may be said to be offered on the Hypothesis I oppose, where there is no Offer supposed to be made of the Grace of Regeneration. According to the Scheme opposed by me, the Offer of Forgiveness, &c. made to Sinners in the Gospel, is made on Condition that Sinners believe on the Son of God; but the Faith in this Case required is supposed to be an Act of a regenerate Soul, and cannot be exercised by any Person 'till he is first *born of the Spirit*, and become a new Creature; which Grace the Sinner is not set in any certain Way to obtain: So that there is supposed to be an Offer of Salvation on a Condition which the Sinner is under a physical Impossibility of performing, 'till he be created anew, and this none can do for him, but God; and he does not on any Terms offer to do it, if the Doctrine I oppose be true. Such an Offer (if any such there were) I confess, seems not to me to have any Kindness in it. If a rich Man should offer a sick Man to give him a fair and large Estate, on a Condition which none but a Man in Health can perform; and which the rich Man being a Physician, could only restore to him, but would not put him in a Way to recover, would the sick Man in this Case think himself much obliged to him for such an Offer, especially if he never did the Thing for him? I think he could not have much Reason for it. Yea, I think that tho' there would be the Shew of an Offer, yet really there would be none.

If it be here said, that Sinners are required to endeavour to believe in Jesus Christ, and they do not know but that God may help them so to do; I desire to know how an unregenerate Man may endeavour to believe in such a Manner, as he is assured he is under a physical Impossibility of doing. I have no Idea of a Way to try to do that which I have no Power to do any Thing towards, and a Thing in

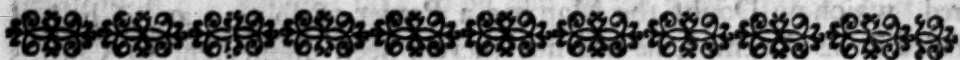
in my present State utterly impossible for me to do. An unregenerate Man may pray to God to give him Grace to believe ; and to do so is his present Duty ; and I believe in his Power : But I would be informed how an unregenerate Person should try to do that which he is sure he cannot ? When our Saviour commanded the Man with the withered Hand, to stretch it forth, *Matth. 12. 13.* he did not command him to do something which he had no Power to do. The Meaning of the Command was, that he should attempt to do it, *i. e.* by moving his Arm, or Parts contiguous to his Hand that was withered, which no Doubt the Man had a Power of doing ; and if he had failed in his Attempt, he had not therein been disobedient to Christ's Command. But I suppose the Command implied a Promise of necessary Aid, if Obedience to it were regularly endeavoured.

Thus, I think it evident, that the Gospel being understood according to the Supposition I am dissatisfied with, is far from being plain and intelligible.

But, *Secondly*, let us consider on the other Hand, whether on my Hypothesis, the Offers of the Gospel are not more plain and easy to be understood ; and so better accommodated to the State of a sinful World, to whom they are supposed to be made.

According as I explain the Gospel of the Grace of God, the Salvation offered in it comprises all that is necessary on God's Part, in order to the everlasting Happiness of those, to whom the Grace of God is offered. God is willing to give *Grace and Glory ; and no good Thing will he withhold* from them who humbly seek him for his Salvation. The Salvation he offers comprises in it, not only the free Pardon of all our Sins, and the Justification of our Persons in his Sight, thro' that most perfect and everlasting Righteousness, which Christ has already brought in, as in *Dan. 9. 24.* a Righteousness ready at Hand, to be imputed to all those that believe in him who is the Author of it ; and is actually imputed to all that ever have believed in him in the Manner which the Gospel requireth ; and shall be also imputed to as many as shall hereafter believe in him, *Rom. 4. 23, 24.* The Salvation offered does, I say, not only comprise in it the Justification of them that believe, by the Righteousness of Christ imputed to them ; but also as a Consequence of such Imputation, the Renovation of their Natures by the special Grace of God, restoring the Image of God, which by Reason of Sin we had lost ; and which could never be restored, were not Sinners first absolved from their Guilt, as I have abundantly proved. In order to their receiving such Benefits there is something required of them, *Namely*, That they believe, re-

pent, and seek the Lord, &c. which may not be understood of such Actions, for Kind, as follow our Justification and Regeneration, but such as, in Order of Nature, go before the same, as I have formerly shewed. And thus the Gospel is plain and intelligible, and the Grace of God shining forth in it, very marvellous, God in it not requiring the Exercise of that Grace, which he does not give, but which Sinners do receive from him; and which he requires them *not to receive in vain*, 2 Cor. 6. 1.



CHAP. III.

THE THIRD USE of the Doctrine insisted on,
That it gives us a very pleasant and endearing View and Prospect of the unparallel'd Love of God, in finding out, providing and revealing such a Way of Salvation as that made known in the Gospel.

I HAVE proved, That there is a conditional Offer of Salvation made to Sinners in the Gospel; that the Grace given in Regeneration, is comprised in the Salvation offered; that, consequently, that Grace cannot be contained or implied in the Condition of the new Covenant, or in the Terms on which God offers to save Sinners; that, therefore, these Terms are such, that Men need not be regenerated or born again, in order to their complying with them; but may, through the Grace of God granted to such as are still in an unregenerate State, be complied with; and that Sinners cannot, while they enjoy the Grace of God granted to them in and with the Gospel, truly plead their utter Inability to comply with the most gracious Terms of the new Covenant.

And from these Things which I now take for granted, it plainly follows, that God does in the Gospel put Sinners, to whom the Offer of it is made, on a *new and second Trial*, on Terms in their Nature possible to be performed by them, in order to their eternal Happiness;

so that if they again miscarry, it is because *they will*, and not because they have *no Power* to come to Jesus Christ, our glorious Redeemer, for eternal Life and Salvation.

Now, what unparallel'd Love is this to self-destroying Sinners, to whom God may truly say, as in Hosea 13. 9. *Ob Israel, thou hast destroyed thy self; but in me is thine Help.* This Love of God is very much celebrated in the holy Scriptures. Give me Leave to recite a few of the Passages wherein it is so. John 3. 16. *For God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life.* 1 John 4. 9, 10. *In this was manifested the Love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the World, that we might live thro' him. Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins.* 2 Cor. 5. 18, 19, 20. *God---hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the Ministry of Reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the World unto himself, not imputing their Trespases unto them; and hath committed unto us the Word of Reconciliation.* Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as tho' God did beseech you by us: *We pray you in Christ's Stead, be ye reconciled unto God.* Matth. 23. 37. *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy Children together, even as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, and ye would not!* Rom. 24. *Or despisest thou the Riches of his Goodness, and Forbearance, and Long-suffering; not knowing that the Goodness of God leadeth thee to Repentance?* Hosea 11. 4. *I drew them with Cords of a Man, with Bands of Love; and I was to them as they that take off the Yoke on their Jaws; and I laid Meat before them.*

I am not ashamed to say, (if I were I should be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, contrary to Rom. 1. 16.) that the Love of God thus manifested towards Sinners, has not a Relation to the Elect only, (tho' principally unto them) but extends it self to the whole World, as in the mentioned John 3. 16. and in 1 John 2. 2. Mark 16. 15, 16. and 2 Cor. 5. 19. as I will, if I am put upon it, and God gives me Liberty, more fully shew.

They are greatly mistaken who think that the Goodness and Kindness of God towards Mankind appearing, is only to be discovered and judged of, by what does in the Event befall them, and not at all by the Nature and Tendency of what he does for them. If God affords unto Sinners such Means and Aids as, according to the Nature of

Things, are sufficient to put them in a Way to obtain eternal Life, they using proper Endeavours to that End: He therein displays his Kindness and Good-will towards them, what ever the Issue be with Respect to them. Nor will God's fore-knowing that these or those will neglect or misimprove the Means and Advantages with which he favours them, alter the Nature of the Thing, and make them no Benefits, which otherwise would have been such; if it would do so, it would be impossible that any should receive real Benefit who finally perish; for it is impossible that God should not know how they will improve, or rather misimprove them: And if God might not justly punish Sinners, either for not doing what they should, or doing what they should not, because he fore-knew what they would do, and what they would not, it would follow, that he could never justly punish any for Sin, because he could not be ignorant of what Men would do or omit, before such Things were done or omitted.

Now since we must judge of the Goodness of God to Mankind, by the Nature and Tendency of what he does, and not only by what eventually befalls them, we must acknowledge the great Goodness of God unto Sinners, even to those of them that shall at last perish; especially this may be affirmed on the Hypothesis I defend: And there is no Doubt but that God intends to gain unto himself a large Revenue of Glory, on the Account of what he does for them, who shall eternally perish for their Sins, as well as for those whom he will eternally save: And in the mean Time, those who never will attain eternal Life, are bound to give Thanks and Praise to God, for putting them in a Way in which they may attain it, if the Fault be not their own.

And it is a great Sin in God's own People, if they do not confess to his Glory, that he deals very kindly by those, who, thro' their own Fault and Negligence, fall of the Grace of God, and fall short of eternal Life. The Obstinacy and Unbelief of Sinners who despise his Goodness, and tread under Foot the Blood of his dear Son, whom he sent to save them, ought not to make us think meanly of what he does for them; but we should admire and magnify his Grace on the Account of it. And I confess I cannot but wonder that many who treat of the Kindness and Compassion of God towards perishing Sinners, restrain all their Discourse about it, to what he has done for the Elect, as if others were no Ways concerned in it; which the Scriptures seem not to do, as appears in the Texts last above quoted, and in many others beside them, as in *Isai. 53. 6. All we like Sheep have gone astray: We have turned every one to his own Way, and the Lord hath laid on him*

the Iniquity of us all. Hof. 13. 9. 2 Pet. 3. 9. *The Lord is not slack concerning his Promise (as some Men count Slackness) but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance.* Can any possibly think that these Places and others like them, may be understood only of the Elect? and that particularly in Ezek. 18. 31. *Cast away from you all your Transgressions whereby ye have transgressed, and make you a new Heart, and a new Spirit: For why will ye die, O House of Israel.*



CHAP. IV.

THE FOURTH USE of the Truth insisted on,
viz. *The Encouragement given to convinced and awakened Sinners, to seek earnestly to God for his special Grace and Mercy.*

IF it be a Truth, as I think it evidently appears to be, That God has in his holy Word, made many conditional Promises to the Unregenerate, of bestowing his special and eternal Mercies (the Grace of Regeneration not excepted) on all such as do, in the Way by him appointed, seriously and diligently seek to him for them; what great Encouragement is there herein to such convinced and awakened Sinners, to comply with the Method proposed in the Gospel, in order to their obtaining these Mercies? There be many of the sinful Children of Men too insensible of their miserable State by Nature; and these had need have the Terrors of the Lord set before them, lest they should remain insensible, and so never look out for a Remedy, but perish in their Sins: But the Case is not so with all: There are some who have been bro't to a Sight of the woful State they are in by Nature; and those need all the Encouragement to seek to God for Mercy, that can, according to the Tenor of the new Covenant, be given them.

I suppose it will not be denied, that Sinners in an unregenerate State, are sometimes greatly awakened, and in some Sort humbled,
under

under a deep Sense of their wretched State by Nature. The Spirit of God sent to convince the World of Sin, Righteousness, and Judgment, does so set home the Terrors of the broken Covenant of Works upon their Souls, that they see themselves in such Danger of Damnation, that they are put upon enquiring, *what they shall do to be saved*, as in *Acts 2. 37.* and *Chap. 16. 30.* And now they desire to flee from the Wrath to come; and it may be are convinced that they cannot be saved by any Righteousness of their own; being sensible that in their present State of Sin and Death, they cannot perform any Actions truly holy; and that, if they could, they should not thereby deserve any Favour at the Hand of God; and that they are therefore *wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked*: And now they would be glad to see a Door of Hope opened to them: And hereupon having had the Gospel preached to them, they begin to conceive that there is some Hopes for them, and some Encouragement given them, and upon this they begin to cry to God for Mercy. But all this notwithstanding, they are in a State of Nature still, and have not yet attained the Faith of God's Elect, and the Remission of their Sins: Or may we venture to tell them the Bitterness of Death is past with them, being already passed from Death to Life, and that there is no Condemnation for them, as being in Christ Jesus? *John 5. 24.* and *Rom. 8. 1.* If we should tell them so, they would be Fools if they believed us, without any better Evidence of a State of Grace, than any Thing that is above expressed. However, it will be acknowledged, that these ought to be encouraged to seek to God in the Way of Duty and Well-doing, for his everlasting Mercies, and in particular for the regenerating Influences of his holy Spirit.

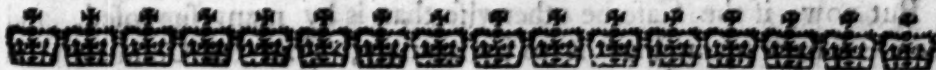
And here the Question is, What Encouragement may these have from the Word of God, to seek to him for the mentioned Favours? Now some must on their Principles say to them, "God calls you to seek to him for his saving Grace, but has not, indeed, promised that he will grant you the Desires of your Souls herein; but it may be he will do so; for he is very gracious and merciful, and does bestow his Grace on many that seek to him for it; and you do not know but he may do so for you, as well as for others: Tho' it may be a Truth, that after all your Strivings and Seeking, you may fail of the Grace of God, and perish for ever: But there is Room for you to hope, that God will bestow his Grace upon you, if you diligently seek him for it, and persevere in so doing: But however you cannot be sure of this, there being no Promise of it in the Word of God."

But

But on the Hypothesis I advance, we may say to such awakened Sinners as are before mentioned, who also have begun to seek the Lord ; “ Go on, poor Souls, cry to God Day and Night, and cease “ not : *Work out your own Salvation, and do it with Fear and Trem- “ bling, lest thro’ your own Negligence you fail of the Grace of God, “ and perish for ever.* Consider how ready God is to work in you both “ to will and to do according to his own good Will and Pleasure. You “ need not doubt of his Mercy to you, if you persevere in seeking “ him. *He has not said to the Seed of Jacob, (who prayed earnestly “ and prevailed, Gen. Chap. 36.) seek ye my Face in vain. †* There- “ fore never doubt ; *for ye shall in due Time reap, if ye sown first. * “ Seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you, &c. † “ God will certainly give his holy Spirit to them that ask him, ‖* Then “ shall ye know, if ye follow on to know the Lord : *His going forth is pre- “ pared as the Morning ; he shall come upon us as the Rain, as the former “ and latter Rain upon the Earth. §* If thou criest after Knowledge, “ and liftest up thy Voice for Understanding ; if thou seekest her as Silver, “ and searchest for her as for hid Treasure ; then shalt thou understand “ the Fear of the Lord ; and find the Knowledge of God. †

Thus may we treat awakened Sinners on my Principles. Now, is there not a great Advantage in having a Foundation in the Word of God ; thus to treat those that desire Encouragement to seek God’s Face ? Has not a poor Sinner on this Hypothesis, greater Encouragement to seek the Lord, than on their’s, who only hold, that there are Grounds of Hope that God will convert and save those who earnestly seek him for his converting Grace ; but deny that he has promised that he will do so ? Surely this is an Advantage that ought not to be lightly esteemed.

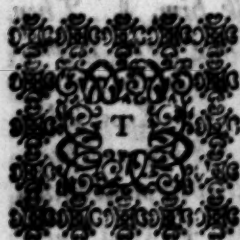
† Isai. 45. 19. * Gal. 6. 9. † Matth. 7. 7, 8. ‖ Luke 11. 13. § Hosea 6. 3. † Prov. 23. 5.





CHAP. V.

THE FIFTH USE. *The Truth maintained in this Essay, takes from all those who refuse the great Salvation offered in the Gospel, any Room to excuse themselves.*



H A T Sinners who neglect their Duty, and the great Salvation offered to them in the Gospel, are very apt to endeavour to *excuse themselves* in the Neglect whereof they are guilty, is too evident to need Time and Pains to be spent in the Proof of it. For Satisfaction as to this, we need only turn to the Parable of the great Supper, *Luke 14. 18,---23.*

And so far as my Observation reacheth, there is Nothing by Sinners more frequently pleaded as an Excuse for their wicked Neglect of the Salvation offered, and Duties required of them; than their utter Inability to comply with the Terms of the Gospel, and perform the Conditions of the new Covenant. They plead, that it is not in their Power to believe and repent, and to call upon God in a Manner acceptable to him: They say, that such as are still in an unregenerate State are wicked Persons, and if they should attempt it, all that they could do, would be an Abomination to the Lord, and would but provoke him. And indeed I know not very well how to answer such Objections, on the Hypothesis I oppose; for if all that it is possible for the Unregenerate to do, is, as we are taught, truly and properly Sin; and we do but provoke and offend the most High God in the best of our Actions, while we are in that State, it is not easy, if possible, for such Sinners to see that their Attempts to seek the Lord, will be like to turn to their Advantage.

But now, if the Case be otherwise than is by many supposed, and even as I have maintained it to be, namely, That the Condition on which Salvation is offered to Sinners, does not consist in any Act or Acts, to be performed by them after they are *born of the Spirit*, and become new Creatures; but in such a Kind of Faith, Repentance, and
Seeking

Seeking of God, as convinced and awakened Sinners, tho' unregenerate, are capable of, during the Day of their Visitation, while God is striving with them by his Word and Spirit; then the seeming Strength of the Objection vanisheth away, and there does not appear to be any Force in it at all.

For according to my Hypothesis, those who go about to excuse their Unbelief and Impenitency, from a pretended utter Inability to do the Things required of them, ought to be told plainly, that this Plea of their's is utterly false, and that they speak falsely in saying, that God in this requires of them what they are not able to perform. If it be said, that they cannot do it without Help from God, I answer, that God does not require them to do it without Help from him: He actually affords them the Aids necessary in order to their beginning to do what he requires; and is ready to afford them more Help, if they need and desire it. I doubt not but so much is intended in Jam. 4. 8, 9, 10. *Draw nigh unto God, and he will draw nigh unto you: Cleanse your Hands, ye Sinners, and purify your Hearts, ye Double-minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: Let your Laughter be turned into Mourning, and your Joy into Heaviness. Humble your selves in the Sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.*

Ye unregenerate Sinners, if ye say ye cannot do this, by the Help of that Grace which God either gives or offers you, ye *belie the Lord*, as the Phrase is, Jer. 5. 12. Our Lord upbraided the unbelieving Jews that they *would not come to him, that they might have Life*, John 5. 40. They could, I acknowledge, have truly said, that they could not do this unless God *drew them*; but they could not truly say, that God drew them not. *He drew them with the Cords of a Man, and with the Bands of his Love*, as in Hos. 10. 4. *The Goodness of God leadeth even those unto Repentance, who after the Hardness and Impenitency of their Hearts, treasure up unto themselves Wrath against the Day of Wrath, and Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God*, Rom. 2. 4, 5. A Man cannot, I confess, become a new Creature, unless God *creates him anew*, giving a new Heart to him: But they speak falsely who say they cannot seek to God for the Mercy, 'till he has first granted the same to them. *Corazin and Bethsaida, as well as Tyre and Sidon, might have repented in Dust and Ashes, tho' God had not first given them new Hearts.* Matth. 11. 21, 22. *Nineveh did so*, Jonah 3. 5. 6.



CHAP. VI.

THE SIXTH USE. *The Truth pleaded for being allowed, does, without any Disadvantage to the calvinian Scheme, remove out of the Way the greatest Difficulty that attendeth it; and renders it the more easy to be received and defended.*

IN the Hypothesis pleaded for in this Discourse, I conceive some Grounds to hope for a better Accommodation of some of the Points in Controversy, betwixt those who are commonly called *Calvinists*, and such as are called *Arminians*: At least I hope that if my Hypothesis might be admitted, the Way would be thereby paved for the contending Parties to come to a better Understanding of some (at least one) of the most important Articles controverted betwixt them; and this without the least Damage to the Substance of that Hypothesis which *Calvinists* endeavour to support, against those who are for the *Arminian* Scheme, in which we think some of the Doctrines of Grace are not well asserted.

Many of those by whom several of the *Arminian* Doctrines seem to be something favoured, appear to me to be Persons of great Seriousness; and I cannot think that the Opposition which they sometimes make against some Things in the Scheme by *Calvinists* pleaded for, arises from an Enmity in their Hearts against the Grace of God; but rather, lest while Men maintain the Sovereignty of God, in the Affair of Man's Salvation, in the Manner that many *Calvinists* do, they should thereby reflect some Dishonour on the Attributes of his Justice and Holiness, the doing of which they seem to dread. However, I believe it will be safest for us to be as charitable as may be, in our Opinion of such Persons; and that we take Care not to make the Difference more and greater than we need.

Now,

Now, suppose the Hypothesis which I have advanced and pleaded for, be a Truth, I hope our owning and allowing of it wou'd, as I have said, render several other Things contained in the Scheme maintained by the Orthodox, the more easy to be admitted by such as at present seem to be afraid to own and embrace them. And that I may make what I here say the more probable, I will give some Instances, in which I apprehend Things might prove as I hope and desire they may.

The first of these is the Case of *Original Sin*. *Calvinists* generally maintain, that the Guilt of *Adam's* first and great Transgression, has fallen on all his Posterity; and that they are all thereby become naturally *Children of Wrath*, and *Heirs of Death*. They hold also, that on the Apostacy of our first Parents from God, they lost his Image, in which they were created; and their Natures were so depraved, that they were thereby rendred incapable of performing any Actions truly gracious and holy, and as such acceptable to the Lord; and so were incapable of Communion with him, and the Enjoyment of him, without the Pardon of Sin and renewing Grace. They also maintain that in this deplorable State all the Off-spring of the first *Adam* are involved.

And hereupon they further affirm, that before Men's Regeneration, they are utterly incapable to accept the Terms, or perform the Conditions, required of Sinners in the Gospel, in Order to their Salvation; because they suppose the Gospel in this Case requireth something, the doing whereof supposeth Men first *born again*, and become *new Creatures*; which, they say, few ever attain to: Nor have Sinners any Offer of this Grace made to them. Now, if it be thus, thinks the Person inclining to *Arminianism*; (and who is there but by Nature is not inclined to Error?) if this be the Doctrine of *original Sin*, and the Consequences following on it, I cannot, I will not receive it, 'till I can see such Evidences for it, as will compel me to yield my Assent thereunto. And now scarce any Evidence will convince such Persons that a Doctrine is true, that is so hard to be digested.

But now let such *Dissenters* from the *calvinian Doctrines* be told, that the Doctrine of *original Sin* is indeed a great Truth; and that the same may be defended, being duly stated and understood; but that it is true also, that God had a Design of glorifying his Grace and Mercy, in the Redemption of Mankind when fallen into a State of Sin; and that for this End, God sent his Son into the World so to die for all Men, that they might be saved on the Terms of a new

Covenant, which Terms are not such as they are not able to comply with, by the Help of God's Grace afforded to them, nor such that they must be savingly converted or born again, before, and in order to, their Performance of them ; but such as thro' God's Help, by his Word and Spirit, they may come up to in their present State ; and so obtain Deliverance from Sin and Death, if it be not their own Fault in refusing the Mercies offered to them. If these Truths are owned and allowed, I think many People would not be so averse to the Doctrine of *original Sin* as they now seem to be : For thus the Gospel proposeth a Remedy against it, to every Person afflicted with the Sense of it, inasmuch as it tells every Sinner how he may come to have his Nature renewed, and the Image of God restored in him ; and that the Condition unto this End required of him, is not such as a Person in a State of Nature cannot by God's Help perform.

Secondly, Another Point which I here intend is that of *Conversion* or *Regeneration* : In this I think *Calvinists* and *Arminians* differ greatly. *Calvinists* (at least many of them) hold, that true saving *Conversion*, which they also call *Regeneration*, is a great Change wrought in the Soul of a Sinner by the Spirit of God, whereby he has a new Bias or Disposition given him. By this, according to them, the lost Image of God is restored to a Sinner : Of carnal he is hereby made *spiritual*, having a new Heart given to him, and a new Spirit put within him, as in *Ezek. 36. 26*. And this they think is an *instantaneous Change* ; and that the Soul is *passive* in it, having no Hand in the working of it ; but that it is wholly a Work of God by his Holy Spirit, *creating Men anew in Christ Jesus unto good Works*, as in *Eph. 2. 10. Psal. 51. 10. John 3. 8. and Chap. 1. 13. Eph. 2. 19, 20. and many other Places*.

Add hereunto, that, according to *Calvinists*, Sinners can do no Actions that are spiritually good, or truly holy, 'till this Change be first wrought in them ; and consequently, it is impossible, (as they think) that any Sinner should perform the Condition on which Salvation is offered to him, 'till he is first *converted* and *born of the Spirit*, as is above expressed. And they further think, (some of them at least) that God has no where offered or promised in his Word, on any Condition whatsoever, that he will work such a Change in any Sinner's Soul : And yet if any Sinner does not believe with such a Kind of Faith as can only be exercised by one already so converted, he shall be more severely punished, than if he had never had any Offer of Salvation made to him.

Now

Now those who are inclined to *Arminianism* think this Doctrine is so harsh they cannot endure it: Nor does it seem to them any Way agreeable to the infinite Goodness and Mercy of God, made known and revealed in the Gospel. And then such seek to find some Flaws in the Doctrine mentioned; and what most readily offers it self to their Mind is, that those who thus hold are mistaken with Respect to the Nature of Conversion; and that Conversion or Regeneration is no such Thing, as they imagine it to be.

The Nature of Man (think they) is not so corrupted, as to need such a mighty Work of the Spirit of God, in order to the changing of it. The Ministry of the Word, they think, and those Motions and Convictions of God's Spirit, which he affords to Sinners under the Gospel, are sufficient to work all the Change in them that is necessary in order to their eternal Happiness: And what is talked of more than this, is a mere Fiction of some Men's Brains, and has no Foundation in the Word of God, on which it can be built.

But unto such as these I say, according to my Hypothesis, there is indeed a great Mistake relating to the Matter under Consideration; but it does not lye, as they imagine, in the Doctrine of *Regeneration* by *Calvinists* maintained. Sinners need by Conversion or Regeneration, such a Change as they hold necessary. The Depravation of their Natures by *original Sin*, renders such a Change indispensibly needful, as our Saviour himself teacheth, *John* 3. 3, - 8. and as is in many other Places of Scripture manifested.

But the *Mistake* lies in this, that it is not truly supposed and maintained, that the Condition required of Sinners in the Gospel, in order to their Salvation, is, that they believe and repent with a Kind of Faith and Repentance, of which no Sinner can be the Subject, who is not first *born of God*, and so a *new Creature*; and consequently in a State of Salvation, before ever he exerciseth such Faith and Repentance: When indeed, God's giving us that Grace whereof such Faith and Repentance is the Fruit and Exercise, is his saving us; not that whereby we are enabled and disposed to perform the Condition required of us. No: The Condition required of us, is, that we, *wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked* as we are, apply our selves to Jesus Christ, for *Gold tried in the Fire*, (true Grace) *that we may be rich*; for *white Raiment*, (his perfect Righteousness) *that we may be clothed, and that the Shame of our Nakedness do not appear*; and for *Eye-Salve*, to anoint our Eyes, *that we may see*. We must not stay 'till we are renewed and sanctified by the Spirit of God, before

before we do this ; but out of a Sense of our Misery, make Haste to Christ to do it for us : And awakened Sinners may, by the Help of that *Grace of God*, which they should *not receive in vain*, do thus, Tho' their Hearts are not yet changed by the Grace of Regeneration ; yet they may go to him for that Grace. When God requires this of us, he requires not what is above our Power, and impossible for us, being furnished with that mentioned Grace of his, 2 *Cor.* 6. 1. Tho' we cannot regenerate our selves, yet it is not true, that we cannot apply our selves to Christ to work this great Change in us by his Spirit. And he invites and requires us thus to do ; and has promised, that if we do, he will not *cast us out*, John 6. 37.

Let this Doctrine be owned and preached among us, to awakened Sinners, tho' unsanctified, that we may thereby encourage them to lay hold on God's Mercy ; and it is possible *Arminians* may then think, that they have far less to cavil against in our Doctrine of *Regeneration*, than they should have if this were denied. I am in Hopes, that if this Truth were duly acknowledged, such as are disposed to *Arminianism* among us, would be more inclined to receive our Doctrine, in such Articles of it as are indeed essential to it.

Thirdly, There is one Point more, which is very essential to the Scheme which I have endeavoured to explain and confirm ; which being allowed, and clearly asserted among us, would have a great Tendency to gain over to us such as lean towards *Arminianism* ; and make them more favourably inclined towards our Doctrine : And this is, That God does not either by his Decree, or the Execution of it, lay a Necessity on any of his Creatures to sin against him. This is one of the Things, about which the *Arminians* contend very earnestly with *Calvinists*, with Relation to our Doctrine : And tho' much of what they say on this Head, is, if I mistake not, very unjust ; yet on the other Hand, I am of Opinion that some *Calvinists* have said Things with Respect to God's Decree, which have given too much Occasion of Offence to those who differ in Judgment from them. If it were granted on our Part, (1) That God does neither in his Decree, nor in the Execution of it, take away the Liberty of free Agents, such as Men and Angels are. (2) That when it is said, that God *wills* or *decrees* the Actions of sinful Men, this must not be understood of an *effective* Decree, but *permissive* only : The Nature of divine Permission being rightly understood. (3) That by that efficiency of God, whereby he executeth his Decree, he does not by any Action of his, lay his Creatures under a Necessity of doing Actions wherein they sin against him : The Concourse of the first Cause with the second, does not

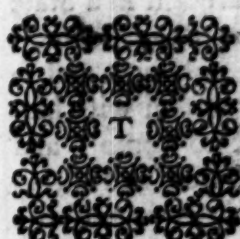
not infer this. If these Things were well asserted and explained, it would, I think, tend much to quiet the Minds of such as are apt to be stumbled at the Doctrine of *Calvinists* about them.

What I have briefly said of such a Tendency, in this Essay, is not only designed as a Testimony to the Truth ; but as what I hope, if allowed to be agreeable thereunto, might in some Measure serve to quiet the tumultuating Thoughts of those who have entertained such an Opinion of the Doctrine of God's Decree and Providence, as does not become the infinite Perfections of his Nature ; and who are displeased at such as maintain the Truth in these Points.



CHAP. VII.

THE SEVENTH Use of the Doctrine pleaded for. *An Exhortation, with Directions, to such as are yet in a State of Nature, to comply with the Terms on which Salvation is offered to them in the Gospel.*

 O encourage Sinners to endeavour that which they are now exhorted to, has been the principal End at which I have aimed in the doctrinal Part of this Essay : And in order hereunto, I think I have plainly shewed, that even the Grace of Regeneration it self is comprised in the Salvation offered ; and consequently not included nor implied in the Condition on which the Offer is made, nor necessary in order to a Compliance with it ; so that for Want of it, Sinners should have no Power to comply with the Terms of the new Covenant.

It therefore now only remains incumbent on me, that I endeavour to persuade such as are still in a State of Nature, unregenerate and unjustified, to endeavour to comply with the Terms on which God offers to save them, *i. e.* to justify and regenerate them, &c.

If God offers such a Salvation to Sinners in a conditional Covenant, as I have well proved he does, they have no Reason to expect it in any

any other Way, than in that in which it is thus offered to them. It must needs, therefore, be a Matter of vast Importance, that those, unto whom this Offer is made, do comply with the Terms or Conditions on which Salvation is thus offered to them.

That there are in the World many such as this Exhortation is directed to, is too evident. There are Multitudes whose irreligious and unholy Lives shew them to be of this Number. And besides this, Men may have gone far in the Profession of Religion, and in the Practice of the external Duties of it; and yet have not hitherto fulfilled the Conditions of the new Covenant, nor obtained a Right and Title to the Benefits of it; and if they shall never do this, they will be exceeding miserable, and that for ever.

But the Misery of such both in Respect of Loss and Sense, is not what I intend here to enlarge upon, this being very well done by many others.

What I here intend, is to offer some Things by Way of Exhortation and Direction to those unto whom this Part of my Discourse is directed. Unto such I then say what here follows.

DIRECTION I.

Consider well what a miserable State you are in before, and until, you have complied with the Terms of the new Covenant. An unjustified and an unregenerate State, is a very miserable State indeed. Such, whatever outward Privileges they may enjoy, are still in a State of Condemnation; and *the Wrath of God abideth on them*, John 3. 18. and Verse 36. Such are also un sanctified and unholy; and so incapable of the Enjoyment of God, and such Communion with him as true Saints may enjoy, either in this Life or that to come; and are liable to the Torments of the Damned, to be suffered in Hell to all Eternity. If you are still in a State of Nature, this is your Case; and it is necessary that you should be sensible of it; for if you will not apply your selves in good Earnest to work out your own Salvation, nor endeavour to perform the Condition of the new Covenant, nor indeed so much as enquire *what you shall do to be saved*, as they did *Acts 2. 37.* and he in *Acts 16. 30.* you must miserably perish for ever.

Such therefore as are still in an unregenerate State, should meditate Terror, as in *Isai. 33. 18.* They should consider the Justice and Holiness of God, the Strictness of his Law, his perfect Knowledge of all that Men do, the Judgment to come, the Punishment that will be inflicted on all such as die in their Sins; and that this will be the
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woful Cafe of all that comply not with the Terms of the new Covenant. By fuch Considerations they fhould endeavour to get a deep Sense of their miserable State by Nature : For while Men fay they are rich, and increased in Goods, and have need of Nothing ; and know not that they are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, as in Rev. 3. 17. they will never follow the Advice given them in the next Words, Verfe 18. *I counfel thee to buy of me Gold tried in the Fire, that thou mayft be rich ; and white Raiment, that thou mayft be clothed, and that the Shame of thy Nakednefs do not appear ; and anoint thine Eyes with Eye-Salve, that thou mayft fee : For they that are whole, need not the Phyfician, but they that are fick,* Matth. 9. 12.

DIRECTION II. Consider well, and rightly understand, what it is that God requires of you, in order to your Salvation. Take heed left you be mistaken in the Terms of the new Covenant. If you are mistaken in this, the Mistake may be fatal to you. There are here two Ways in which Persons may be mistaken to their own Hurt. As (1) by thinking the Terms fo low, that Persons may attain to, and perform what they think is required, and yet never be faved : As when Persons think an external Reformation will answer the End, without any Heart-Reformation ; and fo have no Regard to the *inner Man*, but content themselves with fuch an Amendment of their Lives, that Men cannot accufe them ; but take no Care to do what is required in Jer. 4. 14. *O Jerufalem, wash thine Heart from Wickednefs, that thou mayft be faved : How long shall thy vain Thoughts lodge within thee ! And Ezek. 18. 31. --- Make you a new Heart, and a new Spirit ; for why will ye die, O Houfe of Ifrael ! Joel 2. 13. Rent your Hearts, and not your Garments ; and turn to the Lord thy God---* Obferve that here is Heart-Humiliation and Reformation required ; yet I do not think that Sinners in these and fuch like Texts, are required to regenerate themselves ; which never any Sinner did or will do. There is a Reformation of the Heart which is a Work very much fhort of, and inferior to, the great Work of Regeneration, which God only can work. Sinners may very much reform and amend their own Hearts, as well as their external Actions. Such as please may for this fee the Supplement to Mr. POOL's English Notes, on the mentioned Ezek. 18. 31. There is fuch a Thing as a *moral* as well as a *gracious* Sincerity ; and the former of these God requires Sinners, by the Help of his common Grace, to work upon their own Hearts, but not the latter : This he referves to himself as his own Prerogative, as appears in Ezek. 11. 19. and 36. 26. Wherefore (2) Persons may alfo wrong themselves greatly, by fupposing that to be required of them which is not. If Sinners fuppose, that God requires of them, as the Condition

Condition of his Covenant, that which no Sinner ever did, or can do ; no, not by Grace received from God himself, it is no wonder if they are discouraged, and never attempt this.

And here I will mention two Things which I suppose God never required of any Sinner, in order to his Salvation. As (1) God never required any Sinner to *regenerate* himself. I do not understand that God requires Men themselves to work that great Change which is wrought in Men's Regeneration ; or so much as to have any Hand in it. *Calvinists*, I think, generally own, that in this the Soul is wholly *passive* ; and I cannot but understand the Scripture to speak of it as such a Work, in *Ezek. 11. 19.* and *36. 26.* before mentioned ; also *Jer. 31. 18.* *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned* ; and this is spoken of as the Effect of the mighty Power of God, in the Texts before quoted. This therefore is a Work which I cannot think God requires Sinners themselves to perform. (2) I do not think that God requires Sinners to *exercise saving Grace*, while they have it not. One of my Reasons, is, because this is physically impossible ; as impossible as it is for a Man void of natural Life, to act and move himself. Another Reason of this may be, that it seems to imply a plain Contradiction, as much as it is for a Person to *see* while he is *blind*. If God gives a Man Grace, he can exercise it, but he cannot be enabled to exercise Grace while he has it not : Neither does God require this of any Man living. Man's present Duty, while unregenerate, is not to exercise that Kind of Grace which he is without ; but to wait on God in the Use of Means for the obtaining of it ; attending the Ordinances instituted by him for that End, and performing the Duties unto that End demanded of him, as hearing and reading his Word, meditating on it, and calling on him for his Blessing on the Means of Grace, and praying earnestly to him for the Pardon of his Sins, for Christ's Sake, and to give him his Holy Spirit in the converting and saving Influences of it, &c. Now these are Duties which Persons by the Help of common Grace may perform.

DIRECTION III. Consider well, and understand, how very difficult the Conditions required are to be performed. Tho' I suppose these Conditions may be complied with, by the Help of common Grace, by Persons not yet born of the Spirit ; because if these Conditions are complied with by any, it must be in order to their Regeneration ; and so before, not after, that Work is wrought in them. Tho' therefore I affirm, that these Conditions are not such as the Unregenerate cannot, by the Help of common Grace, perform ; yet I by no Means say, that the Conditions required in order to their Salvation, and consequently in order to their Regeneration, are such as may by them be easily complied

complied with, while they are in a State of Nature. Even those Duties which unregenerate Persons can, by the Help of common Grace, perform, and must perform, if they would be saved, are very contrary to Flesh and Blood, and difficult to be performed by them. That Corruption which they have in them, greatly disinclines them to the Performance of them. They do not find their Hearts well inclined to read the Word of God, hear it preached, and meditate on it; and to examine themselves, and pray earnestly to God for the convincing and converting Influences of his Holy Spirit, &c. Tho' Men may possibly do these Things by such Help as the Unregenerate may receive; yet this is to them hard Work: There is a hard Striving required to it, and great Self-Denial in it. Even in such Actions of the Unregenerate, there is a *Wrestling with Flesh and Blood*, and *against Principalities*, and *Powers*, and *against the Rulers of the Darkeness of this World*, and *against spiritual Wickedness in high Places*, Eph. 6. 12. Which Words I think may be understood not of the Regenerate only, but of the Unregenerate also, when awakened, and excited to begin to *work out their own Salvation*; and to begin to *press into* (or towards) *the Kingdom of God*, Luke 16. 16. and to *strive to enter in at the strait Gate*, Luke 13. 24. The Kingdom of Heaven must be taken by *Violence* by such as would enjoy it; and this Violence must be used in order to Men's obtaining; not after they have it, *Matth. 11. 12.* *Striving to enter into it*, is in order to Entrance; not after Persons are in it. *The strait Gate and the narrow Way* must be found, entred into, and walked in, before we enter into Life, and in order to it; and not only after we have obtained it. Nor does the Difficulty of this consist in the Work of Regeneration it self, which Men themselves have no Hand in, it being wholly performed by God for them; but in the Duties that are preparatory to it.

It is dangerous for Persons in an unregenerate State, to think the Duties and Conditions easy, which are required of them in order to their Salvation; for this tends to make them slighty and careless about them, and to occasion their delaying to perform them.

DIRECTION IV. You must confess, and be very sensible, that there is nothing of Merit in any Thing required of you, or that can be done by you, in order to your Salvation. It is most evident, that the Conditions required in a Covenant of Grace, can have Nothing of Merit in them. Even the Condition of the Covenant of Works had Nothing of Merit in it, much less can the Condition of the Covenant of Grace have any Merit in that. Indeed, if Grace were given according to Works, that would, according to the Language of the Scriptures, and good

Divines, be according to Merit; and then it would not be of *Grace*, but of *Debt*, as in *Rom. 11. 6*. But must this be the Case, if any Conditions are required in the Covenant of *Grace*? Will it then follow, that his Salvation is of *Debt*, and not of *Grace*? This cannot be allowed, and has been sufficiently disproved in Part I. Chap. III. and Part II. Chap. XVII. A Thing may be not at all the less of *Grace*, because it is given in the Way of a Covenant, on some Condition to be performed by him that shall receive it. When Sinners are required to seek the Lord for his Grace and Mercy, thro' the Merits of his dear Son, who has obeyed the Law, and suffered the Penalty of it for them, there is not the least Room for them to imagine they can by this merit any Thing at his Hands. Repentance for Sins committed, believing in a Redeemer for Righteousness and Life, and begging Pardon, have no Appearance of Merit in them. Let not unconverted Sinners think they merit any Thing at God's Hands, when they do this. I am sure they have no Reason for it. Let them, on the contrary, plead with God the Riches and Freedom of his Grace, and the Merits of his Son, when they are seeking to him for his spiritual Blessings and everlasting Mercies, and that will be the Way to obtain them.

DIRECTION V. Take heed you do not, by living in the Practice of any known Sin, provoke God to deny or withhold his special and everlasting Mercies from you. Sinners have no Reason to expect that God will pardon their Iniquities, and sanctify their Hearts by his Holy Spirit, so long as they indulge themselves in any known Sin, either of Omission or Commission. Paul was indeed very suddenly converted: He was going on in an evil Way, *Acts* Chap. 9. But he himself declares, he obtained Mercy because he did it ignorantly, *1 Tim. 1. 13*. Nor was his saving Conversion (I am persuaded) so very sudden that there was no preparatory Work going before it, tho' but of short Continuance. That Out-cry of his, when trembling and astonished he said, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* was, I suppose, of the same Kind with their's, *Acts 2. 37.* and his Chap. 16. 30. Compare those Scriptures and see how much the Passages are alike. I think it is very probable he was then born both of Water and of the Spirit, when Ananias baptized him, saying to him, as in *Acts 9. 17.* Brother Saul, the Lord, (even Jesus that appeared unto thee in the Way as thou camest) hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy Sight, and be filled with the holy Ghost. After which Words, it followeth, Verse 18. And immediately there fell from his Eyes, as it had been Scales; and he received Sight forthwith, and arose and was baptized. Men must first turn at God's Reproof, before they may expect that he will pour out his Spirit unto them, and make known his Words

Words unto them, as in Prov. 1. 23. If we have exceeding great and precious Promises, by which we may be Partakers of the divine Nature, we may not expect to receive this Benefit, till we have first escaped the Corruption that is in the World thro' Lust, 2 Pet. 1. 4. They are mistaken who think, God's ordinary Way is first to regenerate Men, and by that Means to reform their vicious Lives. God's Way is the Reverse of this: He first humbles and reforms Sinners, and then pours out his Spirit on them, and savingly converts them. They must not live in such abominable Practices, as are mentioned in 1 Cor. 6. 9. if they design to see or get into the Kingdom of God, by obtaining true and saving Grace, as in Mark 12. 34.

DIRECTION VI. Delay not your Repentance till it be too late; I mean, 'till it is too late for you to repent, or 'till your Season for it be past and gone. Now there are two Cases in which this may befall you, viz. (1) Death may overtake you while you delay it, and then you have lost your Opportunity for it for ever! Oh! take heed of this. Remember that awful Word in Prov. 27. 1. *Boast not thy self of To-morrow; for thou knowest not what a Day may bring forth.* And forget not that of the Apostle, James 4. 14. *Ye know not what shall be on the Morrow: For what is your Life? It is even a Vapour that appeareth for a little Time, and then vanisheth away.* Tremble at the Tho't of that in Prov. 29. 1. *He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his Neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without Remedy.* Think seriously what Multitudes there are now roaring in Hell, because they wickedly delayed their Repentance, till Death overtook them; and that after Death there is no Season for Repentance unto Life. Be persuaded to do as David did, Psal. 119. 59, 60. *I tho't on my Ways and turned my Feet into thy Testimonies. I made Haste, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.* (2) The holy Spirit may be finally taken from you, if you continue long to resist him, and quench his Motions; by an obstinate delaying of your Repentance; and then you are undone for ever. It will therefore be your Duty and Interest, seriously to consider such Texts of Scripture as hold forth the Danger of his utterly forsaking you, lest he forever leave you. To this End, ponder and lay to Heart, what we have in Gen. 6. 3. *My Spirit shall not always strive with Man.* Psal. 81. 11, 12. *My People would not hearken to my Voice, and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up to their own Heart's Lusts; and they walked in their own Counsels.* Ezek. 24. 13. *Because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged any more, 'till I have caused my Fury to rest upon thee.*

DIRECTION

DIRECTION VII. Persevere in well doing, when you have begun well ; and take heed of Apostacy. Some begin well, but fall away and lose all they have done. This is the sad Case supposed in *Heb.* 6. 4, 5, 6. and in 2 *Pet.* 2. 20, 21, 22. also in *Ezek.* 18. 24, 26. And I doubt not also in *Heb.* 10. 38, 39. Nor is this a Supposition of what never falls out : There be many to whom it may be truly said, as in *Gal.* 5. 4. *Ye are fallen from Grace* : And this not only on Account of fundamental Errors in Doctrine, which they embrace ; but also in Respect of abominable Practices into which they fall, and in which they continue, as in the mentioned Text, 2 *Pet.* 2. 20. Not that regenerate and justified Persons ever do thus, or are liable to it ; for these are all kept by the Power of God, thro' Faith unto Salvation, 2 *Pet.* 1. 5. They are become Pillars in the Temple of God, and shall go no more out, *Rev.* 3. 12. I cannot believe, that the Suppositions of Apostacy which we have in Scripture, relate to the Regenerate, who are expressly secured against it ; but to those, on whom a Work of common Grace only has been wrought, and so are liable to fall away : And such had need beware, lest being led away by the Error of the Wicked, they fall from their own Steadfastness, 2 *Pet.* 3. 17. At least, I think that this may be accommodated to the Condition of the Unregenerate, under a Work preparatory to Regeneration, and must be so, if a total Apostacy be intended. It is certain that many Professors of Religion have totally fallen away, after great Convictions and Reformation. Nor is the Promise of Salvation made to any Measure of such Grace as the Unregenerate have ; but to such as persevere in that Way of well-doing, which some who are not savingly converted, are engaged in, as I think I have sufficiently shewed, Part II. Chap. XIV. To such I say, as in *Heb.* 10. 35, 36. *Cast not away therefore your Confidence, which hath great Recompence of Reward. For ye have need of Patience, that after ye have done the Will of God, ye might receive the Promise.*

DIRECTION VIII. Rely on the free and sovereign Grace of God, to make you willing to attend the Duties required of you, in order to your Salvation. Acknowledge also, that your doing so depends absolutely on his Good-will and Pleasure. Tho' God has promised that he will save you, if you perform what is to that End required of you ; yet he has made no Promise to you, that you shall perform the Condition on which Salvation is offered to you. Whether he will effectually incline your Hearts to this, is absolutely at his Liberty. It is not consistent with the Nature of a conditional Promise, that he that proposeth it should engage himself to the Person unto whom it is made, for both the Condition required, and the Promise made on that Condition.

Condition. To suppose, that in the conditional Promise of the Gospel, God promiseth Sinners both these, is a plain Contradiction. Tho' I cannot tell you, that if you fail or fall short of the Grace of God, the Reason is, because you have no Power to comply with the Terms of the new Covenant; yet I can tell you, that your doing this depends absolutely on God's free and sovereign Grace; who, if ever you are saved, must *work in you both to will and to do, according to his own good Will and Pleasure*. Here that is applicable, Rom. 9. 16. *So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy*. Persons may have Power to comply with the Terms of the new Covenant, and yet never do it. There is a great deal more to be done for a Sinner in order to his Salvation, than the bare giving him such a Power; even an effectual Persuasion to do the Things required of him; which tho' he has Power to perform, yet he never would without such Persuasion. Let therefore every unregenerate Sinner humbly and freely confess, that after all that God has hitherto done for him, he shall miserably perish, and that for ever, if he does not, in his infinite Mercy, effectually persuade him to do what is incumbent on him in order to his eternal Happiness. And I do most freely & heartily acknowledge, that a Soul that is bro't to this, is in the most likely Way to obtain saving Grace and Mercy; and such an one seems not to be far from the Kingdom of God. If some believe and are saved, when others neglect the Salvation offered to them, and eternally perish, a sovereign God must have the Glory of *making the Difference*: Those who believe and are saved, would have done no more than those who remain Unbelievers and are damned, if God did no more for them. And we may to this Case apply those Words of our glorious Lord, with very little Variation, Matth. 13. 25, 26. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these Things from the Wise and Prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes*. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy Sight. It must be so, and it is best it should be so: It is for our Interest to acknowledge it, and that our Hearts should acquiesce in it, and to it say, AMEN.

DIRECTION IX. While you seek to God for his Salvation, rely on his Mercy, & on the Merits of his dear Son; and plead with him his Promises of saving all such as diligently seek him. They are not only the Regenerate and Justified that may do this: Those who have not yet secured the Salvation of their own Souls, are bound so to do; and it is not impossible that they should. They cannot indeed do this in that gracious and holy Manner, that Persons already in a State of Grace can; but that they cannot do it at all, is not to be allowed. The Unregenerate may have a Hope and Trust in God, answerable to that Persuasion of his

his Power and Mercy, which by Means of the glorious Gospel, they have attained to. If this were not so, how should they wait on God in the Use of Means, for the Salvation of their Souls? which many unregenerate Persons do. Such may also plead with God the conditional Promises of his Covenant, made to such as diligently seek him: Such as we have in *Matth. 7. 7.*-----*11. Luke 11. 9.*-----*13. Prov. 23. 4, 5.* And unto awakened unregenerate Souls, I say, Do not think it impossible to do this, by the Help of God's Grace, before you are born of the Spirit, or savingly converted, and while your Day of Grace lasteth, and God is by his Word and Spirit striving with you. Let the Promises God has made encourage you to do so: *For he has not said to the Seed of Jacob, (of which many are unconverted) seek ye me in vain: Therefore seek the Lord while he may be found*---*Isai. 55. 6.* Let nothing discourage you from endeavouring to do so: And while you are thus drawing nigh unto God, he will draw nigh unto you, *James 4. 8.* Trust in God, and he will not fail you. *Psal. 34. 8.* *O taste and see that the Lord is good: Blessed is the Man that putteth his Trust in him.*



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